

All Things
Work Together
for Good
To Them that
Love God

Roy McKinsey



All Things Work Together for Good To Them that Love God / Roy McKinsey

WEST
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It's Concerning The Yearning For Learning

They come from all over the globe to West Virginia Wesleyan College to get their education. Most of these eager young people go on from Wesleyan to graduate schools before returning to their homes in Nigeria or Kenya, Malaya or Indonesia, Switzerland, or India, Formosa or Korea.

It is a long step from the homeland to faraway Buckhannon, but the move is made easier through the thoughtfulness and generosity of Methodists of West Virginia. They have contributed more than \$50,045 in the past eight years, alone, to finance the education of more than 34 overseas students at West Virginia Wesleyan through the Dorothy Lee Scholarship Fund.

It is Dr. Roy McCuskey's purpose that funds realized from the sale of this book above the cost of its publication go toward this fund. He has been active in the promotion of the fund since its inception back in 1946 when the daughter of Wesleyan's first Chinese graduate sought to ma-

tricate at the college. It is also his wish, we believe, that a greater understanding of the fund may be gained through reading of what he has written about it in the final chapter of this book.

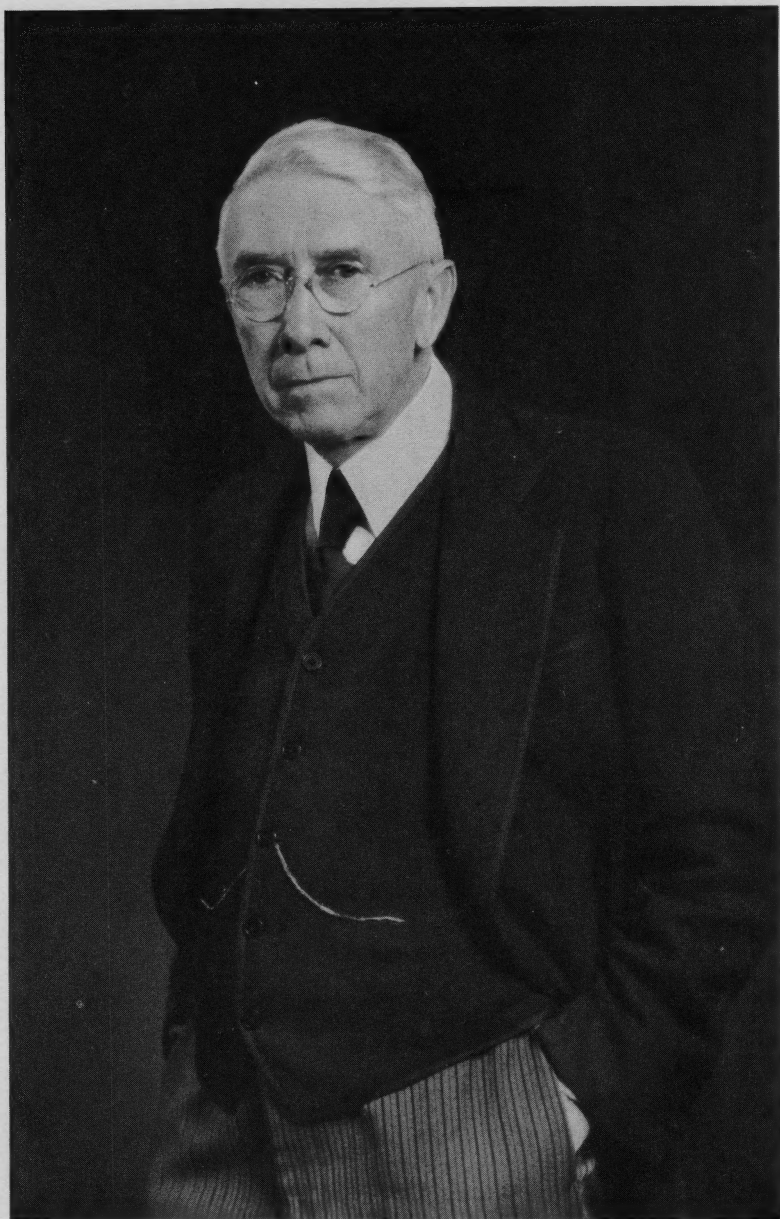
Even as one seeks the source of a stream by tracing its waters back to the spring at the utmost reaches of its watershed, so one could say, too, that the Dorothy Lee Scholarship Fund may trace its source to the day an American missionary from West Virginia adopted a homeless Chinese waif to raise as a foster child.

It is another example of Dr. McCuskey's viewpoint that "All Things Work Together for Good to Them that Love God."

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Ray McCuskey



Dr. Roy McCuskey

All Things Work

Together for Good

To Them That Love God

BY ROY McCUSKEY

Introduction

It is difficult to introduce a great man.

Qualities of greatness are often hard to identify, but not so with Dr. Roy McCuskey, for his singleness of purpose clearly identified him as one who believes without any doubt that "all things do work together for those who love the Lord."

I have known many men throughout my life but one of the more outstanding of these has been Dr. McCuskey. His dedication to family and work, his love of people, his persistent service and patient waiting, his ability to counsel and his strength to inspire, all unite in this man of tender spirit.

Here also are reflected the qualities of compassion and conscience, of mind and heart that have made him not only an effective preacher of the Word and pastoral counselor, but also that of a Christian educator and leader of youth.

His sense of humor, his confidence in tomorrow, his tolerance of the past, and his hope for the future, all combine to make this man one of great stature and personal worth. To read his life is to feel the impact of these qualities of greatness and to review his work is to deepen one's affection for West Virginia and its people, the church and its program.

The leadership of Dr. McCuskey was especially significant in the life of West Virginia Wesleyan College between the years of 1931 and 1941, for during this time the institution underwent one of its more critical periods of transition.

Though caught in the depths of the depression, Dr. McCuskey was able to draw on the strong resources of a lifetime with full confidence that the college would survive and grow as well as achieve the fullness of its purpose.

The college did meet the crisis through his efforts and began a forward movement that has made it a church college of real distinction. For his courage and dedication in such a time, we shall all be eternally grateful.

To read his story, then, is to capture some of the determination and insight that made his administration one of the more outstanding in the life of Wesleyan.

One of Dr. McCuskey's special interests throughout the years has been the Dorothy Lee Fund for Overseas Students. It was established in 1946 to give financial aid to students from other lands wishing to study at Wesleyan. Because of The Dorothy Lee Fund Committee, a large number of students representing many countries have been privileged to study at Wesleyan and to feel the impact of the total program designed to develop competent, cultured, Christian persons.

Dr. Roy McCuskey is such a person. His continuing interest in and support of the college will influence scores of young people to capture his spirit. May it always be so.

It is an honor to follow Dr. McCuskey as president of West Virginia Wesleyan College and I trust that this administration and those to follow may reflect the high spirit of this devoted and able man.

President Stanley H. Martin

In Appreciation

By way of kindly warning, let me say that I make no pretense as a writer. Writing never has been easy for me, so there will be many literary faults. While from time to time I made notes of events, jotted down thoughts which came to mind, wrote outlines of sermons and addresses, made some complete manuscripts and sent many letters, I never attempted anything for publication.

Therefore, when some of my family and close friends suggested that certain events during my life and work were worth preserving, I reluctantly began writing. It has been a slow process.

Chief among those who were persistent in this matter is Mrs. Laura Rector Hedrick. Her suggestions as to form and content have been valuable.

Dr. George L. Glauner and Dr. Ralph C. Brown have helped in verifying certain dates. Mr. Frank Keefer of Wheeling gave me items about Thomson Church, Wheeling.

For typing, I am indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Harold O. Young and Mrs. Florence Teft Phillips, all of Parkersburg.

Gratitude also goes to Creel Cornwell, director of public information, and to Walter R. Collins, director of alumni affairs, both of West Virginia Wesleyan College, for the final preparation of the manuscript and illustrations for publication.

This book is dedicated to the
Students
of the Dorothy Lee Scholarship Fund for
Overseas Students of
West Virginia Wesleyan College
All proceeds above the cost of printing and distribution
of this book will be given to the
Dorothy Lee Scholarship Fund.

A Forward Glance

"Well, we are on our way—and what a new and exciting experience *this* will be"!

The above remark was made to my lady as we left our garage Friday, May 23, 1958, and headed towards Buckhannon. *WHY* so unusual? *WHAT* was it all about? We had been going to Buckhannon at least twice a year,—for Commencement and Homecoming—since we left Wesleyan in 1941. Sunday, May 25, would be our *BIG DAY*. The second of the men's new residence buildings was to be named "McCuskey Hall," and on that day, following a luncheon for our family and guests, the naming ceremony was to take place. So our thoughts and conversation went over events of the years since the fall of 1901 when I made my first trip to Buckhannon.

We were to stay in the Edna Jenkins Home Economics Cottage as guests of the college; that name—Edna Jenkins—we talked about; she, her brother Jim and I were students together in the Seminary. During my term as district superintendent, our friendship was renewed when I was a guest in the Peter Jenkins home at Petroleum. This friendship continued through my years at Wesleyan.

The whole affair, with family and friends present, would be an honor to which we were not accustomed. It was hard to see the reason why for so many others had made great sacrifices to maintain the institution by gifts and service, some serving on the faculty and the board of trustees years longer than I had served as president.

Shortly after I resigned the presidency, a few persons expressed themselves concerning our work. Ray Jones once wrote me a warm and appreciative letter. The late Judge Waugh once remarked that Wesleyan College would have left Buckhannon had it not been for "Jake" Wells and myself. The names of J. Elbert Wells and Claude E. Goodwin were always linked with mine because of our intimate association from student days. What loyal friends and good ministers they were! Both are gone and unable to share with us this honor. Dr. Thomas W. Haught, in his history of Wesleyan College, mentioned at the time of his writing that we were too close to my administration to properly evaluate the work.

Was this event to point up any importance to those ten years, 1931-1941?

We would soon see.

Sunday came. Friends gathered in the dining room of the new building and after luncheon they again gathered on the campus in front of the building. Speeches were made and responses given.

* * *

Now that it is all over and we have had some time to think about it,—just *WHAT* is the meaning of it all? I am still unwilling to accept the distinction as entirely due to my efforts. Rather I wish to think of our work at West Virginia Wesleyan as just part of a cooperative interest and enterprise in which many were associated and, covering the span of several years, all was directed by the loving guidance of our Father in heaven. To put it another way, this is but one more evidence of the Scriptural truth that "All things work together for good to them that love God".

Will my story as I tell it prove this?

Let us see — —

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CHAPTER I

A Farm Home Burns

ONE OF MY EARLIER and more vivid memories is an incident of tragic and important consequences. The house in which we lived when I began to remember things was the hewn-log house on Ben's Run in what was known as the Big Run Community, which was built by my Grandfather McCuskey.

I do not remember when we moved into it, but I do remember many things which happened there—one or two Christmases, long winter evenings before the log fire looking at pictures and books by lamp light, the flagstone walk lined with hollyhocks, the "spring house" with crocks of milk, the hollowed-out log watering trough, "the orchard, the meadow, and every beloved spot which my infancy knew". Have often wished I were an artist so that I might reproduce that lovely spot! My memory holds many details of house and farm buildings.

I recall the death of my oldest sister, Mary, and the brief service in the home. The first minister I remember was Frank Lynch, pastor in Cameron, who conducted my sister's funeral service. My mother was ill at the time of Mary's unexpected death and the picture deeply engraved in memory is that of my father and one of my uncles carrying mother to the coffin to take one last look into the face of her first-born child. It was

here also that father lay for long weeks with typhoid fever, effects of which never completely left him.

There was another house on the farm which stood on the hill above the old log house. When Grandmother McCuskey and Aunt Nannie moved out to make their home with the other daughter, Aunt Minerva Davis, our family moved into the newer house. It was a four-room frame structure, weather-boarded on outside and plastered within.

We had been there only about a year and a half when we were "burned out". One rather warm day in early spring, the dinner bell had called father and my brother Ben from the field for the noon meal. We sat down and father returned thanks, and then we heard a startling, crackling noise! We all rushed out to be frightened almost stiff, as we saw fire and smoke coming out of the shingle roof. Someone yelled "fire". Another began ringing the dinner bell to call the neighbors. The water was drawn by windlass from the well. It was a slow way to get water. We began to carry things out. Soon neighbors came, racing their horses or running on foot, to help save what could be snatched from the rapidly burning house. The walls were soon down, and nothing was left but the blackened chimneys. We were homeless! What a picture of desolation there was written on the landscape and in the faces of father, mother and the four children then at home.

All were so busy trying to save furniture and bedding that clothes were forgotten and all any of us had to wear was on our backs. Neighbors were kind and we all found somewhere to stay that night and for several days and nights. One of father's brothers, Uncle Milton, took three of us. One neighbor said to father: "John, if you can clean out that old log house on my farm, you can live there this summer until you get your crops gathered". So we stayed there that summer.

The Sunday after the fire I went to Sunday School wearing a hat that a neighbor boy gave me. It was about two sizes too big, and flopped down over my ears so that I looked like an undersized scare-crow. Frank Todd, one of our neighbors, gazed on me in amusement, and then gave me a fifty-cent piece

saying, "Here, tell your Pap to buy you a hat that will fit".

My oldest brother, Sam, had worked for some time in an iron mill in Wheeling. He helped persuade father and mother to move the family to the city, and, in the fall of 1892, farm scenes were exchanged for city life. Father was never happy. He could not adjust himself to the new way, and within a few years he died. Mother, from then on, took the responsibility of holding us together, trying to buy a home, and to keep me in school. It is only as I look back over the years that I can see that this burning farm house, and other incidents in those early years, were a part of the "All things working together".

I was born June 19, 1883, on the Charley Bonar farm, in the Big Run Community about four miles from Cameron, Marshall County, West Virginia. When my mind reverts to that date, as it always does on each anniversary, I can't help but marvel at the courage of women in childbirth, especially those of the earlier days in backwoods and farm regions; the lack of pre-natal medical advice and attention, lack of hospital facilities, difficulty in reaching doctors, and often the very primitive and inadequate home supplies.

I once asked my oldest sister if she remembered my arrival and whether I caused Mother much trouble. What she told me was no doubt typical of hundreds and hundreds of confinement cases. As the time of my expected arrival drew near, father rode horseback into Cameron and brought out grandmother, my mother's mother. Some days later he made the trip again in a hurry to get the doctor, a man named McCollough, but I got there before he did!

Meantime, father had sent the other children to the cornfield, supposedly to hoe corn, but really to get them out of the way. Later he went to them and told them they had a "little brother up at the house". My sister said they all hurried in to take a squint at me, and that I "wasn't much to look at"—which short description has applied ever since.

A year or more afterwards, the family moved to a house on Uncle Milton's farm. There is one dim memory of that home. It had to do with a visit my mother made to a sick neigh-

bor, named Dowler. She took me with her, and I remember seeing the man lying in bed and she told me he was very sick. I believe he never recovered.

The next move the family made was to the log house on grandfather's farm. By the way, the house in which I was born was a log house very much the same type as the one into which we now moved. From what I learned from mother and the older members of the family, we "moved" often, but never very far from the Cameron region. Mother once said she had lived in some "terrible places", but water was plentiful and soap was cheap, so with whitewash for the outside and paper or whitewash inside, the house was made livable. These "moving" experiences made an impression on me to which I shall refer in another chapter.

The first, and so far as we have been able to learn, the *only* McCuskey to come to America was my great grandfather James, of Scotch ancestry, who came from County Tyrone, Ireland. Of his forebears, we know nothing. He settled first in southwestern Pennsylvania and later came into Ohio County, Virginia, and settled on what is now known as Stone Church Road near Elm Grove. He married Nancy McCombs, reared a family of eleven children, and he and his wife lie in the Stone Church Cemetery.

My grandfather was Silas, who married Mary Huey, and they reared a family of eight children, of whom my father, John Henry, was the third. I never saw my grandfather. A few years before I was born, he was accidentally killed by a falling tree. I do recall my Grandmother McCuskey, who lived several years after my birth. About 1845, Grandfather bought the farm on which stood the hewn-log house mentioned a page or two back. He mended shoes, farmed and served as squire in that sparsely settled community.

The older generation of McCuskeys were Presbyterian and, until the organization of that church in Cameron, held their membership at West Alexander, Pennsylvania, or in the Stone Presbyterian Church in Elm Grove. Uncle William became a minister in the Presbyterian Church and his only son, Frank,

spent all of his active years as a missionary in India under the Presbyterian Board of Missions.

Incidentally, Uncle William did a fine service for the McCuskey Clan by writing the only record we have of the family in America. At different times some of our relatives have tried to trace the name in northern Ireland, but without success. There was a settlement of the Scotch, or Scotch-Irish as they were frequently called, in the southwestern part of Pennsylvania and the northern panhandle of West Virginia. There were such names as McConnell, McCleary, McCombs, Hervey, Huey, Lindsey, etc. in that section. Such names are common on markers in cemeteries at West Alexander, Pennsylvania, and at Stone Church Cemetery in Elm Grove, West Virginia. Uncle William's ministry was in the western states and he died in Boulder, Colorado, a city where some of his family still live.

My mother was Margaret Jane Manning, the daughter of Benjamin, and Nancy (Marshall) Manning. She was one of three children who were left fatherless when she was about four years old. Grandmother was married a few years later to Jacob Riggle, whom we always called "Grandpa". Mother's early years were pretty hard, money was scarce and farm work laborious. Then the Civil War came on and both her stepfather and her brother, Sam Manning, enlisted in the Union Army. Then it was doubly hard for her mother to care for the family.

Life was not much easier after she and father were married. They went to Ohio where they lived as tenants on a farm near Malaga. The owner of the land offered to lease some of the acreage, or sell on terms by which after a period of years the land would be his. Mother said she favored the plan and wanted to stay there but father was afraid to venture. Such a fear followed him all his life. He said that they "might live there awhile, and work hard and then lose everything". Years later when mother talked about it to me, she made this comment, "We might as well have tried it, for we could not have been worse off. We never had anything as it was".

There were six children in our family, Mary, Samuel, Nannie, Iona, Ben and myself. There were about two years between

the children, except the nine years between Ben and me. Consequently, mother seemed "old" to me. Early years on the farm, and still hard work running a rooming and boarding house in South Wheeling, brought early wrinkles to her face and a stoop to her shoulders. She had a bit of humor, and always meant to be pleasant, but an underlying sense of disappointment, failure and sadness gave her a serious manner.

I once asked my oldest brother if, when he was a boy, Mother was always so serious. He said, "No, she was happy and cheerful and stout as a young heifer; she used to go to the fields with father, take the youngsters along, put them under a tree and hoe her row of corn along with father". She was fairly sturdy throughout her life and was a good home keeper. She spent her last years with my oldest sister, Mrs. Nannie Muldew, in Wheeling, and passed on in her seventy-eighth year.

I think here is a good place to pay a well deserved tribute to my parents. They were humble, but honest and God-fearing stock. Neither one had had much schooling. They were married in 1863, father 25, and mother 18, and started the struggle of building a home. Both were of farmer families, and careful in their religious living. Among my earlier recollections are family devotions, scripture reading and prayer conducted by father, grace at table, church and Sunday school. Father was called on to visit the sick and dying, and to pray with them.

Quite recently when my brother Ben, whom I had not seen for nearly 50 years, visited us, he told me this incident: a man who boasted of his unbelief, would often twit father about his strict religious life, and on one occasion when his remarks were quite bitter, father said to him: "You will live to regret what you have said". Some time later the man became seriously ill. He sent for father, apologized and asked his prayers.

An old neighbor, who had not been interested in church and seldom attended, came to my first service in one of the churches on my first charge. Some one expressed surprise that he was at the service. His reply was: "If ever there was a good man in this neighborhood it was John McCuskey, and as long as his boy is preaching here I'll attend". On that same charge there

was an "open country" church. Here fifty years before I became pastor, my mother was converted in the old log meeting house which stood on the same spot. I discovered there an old Sunday School record book with my father's name as Sunday School Superintendent.

There was not much regularity in the church services at the Union Church in our community, so father would take us all in the old "Road Wagon" the four miles or more to the Methodist Church in Cameron where they held their membership. Father was strict in his religious habits, hated liquor and voted the Prohibition Party ticket. Both parents maintained their religious faith through all their hardships and set before their children a Godly example. More than once during my first pastorate, I thanked God that they had lived in that region and had by their Christian activity, all unconsciously prepared the way for me and I have never ceased to be grateful for the memory of their Christian experience.

CHAPTER II

South Wheeling

IN OCTOBER OF 1892, after father's rental year had ended on the farm and his crops were all harvested, he sold all he had except one mare and one cow which he took with him when the family moved to South Wheeling. He could find no work for which he could use the mare so he finally sold her. We kept the cow for some time. She furnished milk for ourselves and some for sale. We discovered that the city, even then, was no place for cows and horses. We realized the farm could not be transferred to town.

Perhaps we all learned that it was hard to get the "country" out of us! In fact, my parents had for a long time fought the idea of leaving the farm. Father, particularly, feared the evils of city life and never wished to subject his children to the danger of the open saloon, gambling and drunkenness which he knew were prevalent. However, he was not a good manager, and modern scientific farming had not yet arrived. Add to this a string of misfortunes, illness, death, loss of some cattle, a stolen horse, and finally fire, all of this made it easy to convince mother and him that life would be easier in town.

The older children had all the schooling they would get, but I had the chance for more. So after finding out what I had learned in the country in the three Rs, I was placed in the fifth

grade and started on my way through the public schools of Wheeling. I encountered something strange and new to me—the German language. It was taught in the grades at that time, but was not compulsory.

Wheeling had a large German population and I recall how queer some of the names sounded to me at first. Such names as Kalbitzer, Kindleberger, Rothlisberger, Schneider, Minke-meyer, Schrebe, Honecker, Rosenberg, Armbrecht, Vieweg were strange to my ears. In that end of the city also there were developing other national groups, Poles and Slavs, who were being employed in the iron and steel mills. Many of the German families and their descendants played an important part in the business and professional life of the city. Boys and girls of these families were to become my friends and companions as time moved along.

Roughly speaking, South Wheeling extended from Wheeling Creek to Forty-eighth Street which was the line separating Ohio from Marshall County, and Wheeling from Benwood. More particularly, South Wheeling was regarded as the lower end of the city from Thirty-third Street to Forty-eighth and was known as the Ritchie District or the eighth ward. We moved into a house on Jacob Street in the 4400 block, and later down below Forty-fifth Street. We made another change in residence after father's death, and a small inheritance came to mother from Grandfather McCuskey's estate. She used the money as a down payment on a house located at 4509 Jacob Street.

A grade school, known then as Ritchie Annex and later as the McKinley School, was located at Forty-fourth and Eoff Streets. After finishing the eighth grade, the children of the Annex were transferred to the main Ritchie building between Thirty-sixth and Thirty-seventh Streets on Wood Street.

A trolley ran in front of our house, and the car barns were in Benwood just across 48th Street. I remember that the first cars were equipped with twin rope-like wires, and that the current was supplied by twin wires. Later the single wire and single steel trolley came into use. When the old type trolley came off the wire, the operator would use a pole to put it back

in place. I suppose that is how the slang expression of that day originated. When some one acted a bit foolish, it would be said that he "was off his trolley".

There were two land-marks close to the city line, but on the Benwood side, Whiteman's Grove and the Drovers' Home. The Grove spread out along the bank of Boggs Run, and contained a small dance pavillion and some picnic tables. Further along the run and adjacent to the grove were trees, small shrubs and blackberry vines. With other youngsters I wandered down there in summer to pick berries. On that spot now stands the Wheeling Steel blast furnace and the entire region almost to the Wheeling line is covered with railroad and mill facilities.

North of the Grove and on the same street stood a building known as the Drovers Home, operated at that time by a man named Seabright. It was a stopping place for men bringing their live stock into Wheeling, either for local meat packers or for shipment. When I worked for a grocery store, I delivered goods to the Seabright family.

There was a vacant piece of ground stretching from Jacob Street to the B. and O. Railroad and between 46th and 47th streets, now used as a city playground. It was known as Baron's Pond, as part of it would be covered with water in the winter and furnished a good place for ice skating and sledding. In summer it was a ball field, and at one time was surrounded by a high board fence. I could sometimes find a knot hole! It was here that I first saw a football game, when the players' long hair was their only head gear!

I thought it would be fun to learn German, so I began my lessons in the seventh grade with the alphabet and the script. Two of my playmates were George and Max Vieweg, both of whom became physicians and surgeons. They were in a training class in their Lutheran Church and asked me to join them, which I did. Their pastor seldom spoke English, and I was having a hard time of it. Besides, the class was looking towards "confirmation" and what business did a Scotch-Irish Methodist have in such a group?

This Vieweg family had a store just across the street from our first home in the city, which was in the 4400 block on Jacob Street. As I said, we boys played together, and I was often in their store and home. Their father told me a story which well illustrates the difficulty new families, especially from foreign lands, find in breaking into communities and in securing employment where other nationality groups were already fairly well established. By the time the Vieweg family arrived in Wheeling, the English and Irish had settled. His first job, pushing a wheelbarrow, was with a building contractor. He had to work in a line in front of an Irishman, who, for no other reason than that the new employee was a "dumb Dutchman," insisted upon bumping him with his wheel. Mr. Vieweg said he would come home some nights with his heels sore and bleeding. America may be a "melting pot", but many of us seem to resist the "melting process".

The family had already become identified with the Wesley Methodist Church in South Wheeling and all were members except myself. The first minister I recall very distinctly was the Rev. L. W. Roberts, for it was he who baptized me and received me into the church, and who with his children, Gertrude, Luella and Lakin, remained close friends until death. The next pastor was Rev. S. P. Crummitt, who a few years later was district superintendent of Buckhannon District when I entered Wesleyan as a student. Rev. Gregory Bleakley, of whom I shall speak later, was the next pastor of Wesley Church. His ministry was fruitful, especially with a large group of young people.

South Wheeling had its neighborhood groups of "kids" and I was part of one. We played the usual games of marbles, sandlot baseball, and football. Basketball hadn't come into vogue yet. We skated in winter when the river froze or on one or two "ponds" that were available. There were no supervised public playgrounds. In summer, we swam in the river. The boys would line up on the shore with everything off but pants and wait until it was dark enough for city lights to come on, and then go in naked. The little German Band frequently came along and the Italian organ grinder with his monkey arrived often.

That end of the city furnished its quota of derelicts and odd characters. One quaint old fellow was known to us as "Coal Box" because he was filthy in appearance. It was said that he spent many of his nights in family coal sheds whenever he could find them open. There was another whose chief accomplishment was profuse profanity. Under the slightest provocation he could coin more profane words and join them in longer phrases than any one ever knew. Without a doubt he was the "champion cusser"!

Then there was a poor old sot whom all the kids liked, because he seemed to be at his kindest when drunk. He was never abusive, nor mean. He used to gather us around him and deliver temperance lectures, usually winding up with "Never take the first drink, boys, and you'll never be like me, just Old Bony that nobody likes. And may the chains of human friendship never rust"! Once I saw him staggering along the pavement when he bumped into an electric light pole. He straightened up and struck as dramatic a pose as his wobbling legs would permit, and shouted at the light pole: "Get out of my way, thou base illuminator!"

In one of his occasional attempts to break his drinking habit, my brother who was a foreman in one of the steel mills gave him a job. One day, so my brother told me, he saw this fellow down on his knees among other workmen, praying for strength in his struggle against his appetite for liquor. The odds seemed against him. Not only the insatiable thirst, but his old cronies, and the always-near saloon and the friendly bartender kept pulling at him. He never got away from the bottle.

Recently, I read an article by Morris Frank, "First Lady of the Seeing Eye". I called to mind another familiar figure on our streets, a blind man led by a small dog. What breed of canine it was I do not know. It may have been a mongrel. However, it was well-trained. The owner carried on one shoulder a bundle of brooms, and on his other arm a basket of matches, shoe strings and pencils. In that same hand he carried a cane, and held the end of his dog's leash. The dog's collar had a tiny bell which kept tingling as he and his master walked along. The

dog would stop at the curb, and when all was clear he would tug on the leash. I never knew the history of the case, whether the owner or some one else had trained the dog, but it was a smart and faithful helper.

There were peddlers of all sorts in those days. Milk was poured out of the measures into the containers of the customers. Fresh vegetables, eggs and butter, and some poultry were brought to the door, or the gate, by farmers. Some had their regular customers to whom they delivered marketing at intervals. Fresh meat was sold from wagons. Each made his approach known in his own way—a bell, or gong, or a special call. One meat peddler used to call “flesh”, but when the word came out of his mouth it was “flash”! One Italian fruit vendor used this line, “Nanios, nanios, nica banan, tena centa duz.” He always had *some* bananas which he could sell at that price. Then there were umbrella menders, scissor grinders, peddlers of queensware, pots and pans. Altogether, it was an interesting and lively section of the city.

Now let's go back to school days. I finished the grades in 1897, and entered Wheeling High School the first year the city had a high school. It opened on Market Street in what was known as the Maxwell property, where the Library now stands. I was not much impressed by the set up, although as I remember now, there were some excellent teachers and I recall some of the boys and girls who came from other parts of the city. One year was scarcely long enough to get well acquainted nor for much of a school spirit to develop. That was my last year in public school.

Times were difficult and I needed more for clothing and books than Mother could supply without some earnings from myself. I began in my early teens to run errands for a grocery firm known as the S. E. Baron & Co. The store was owned by two women, Sarah E. Baron and her widowed sister, Mrs. Emma J. Reese, who was the manager. Their business grew and more help was needed in delivering than I could manage after school hours so, at the close of the first year of high school, I began

working full time. Delivery of goods was at first by pushcart; finally, by horse and wagon.

Store business was good training for me as I discovered later. Two things impressed on me by Mrs. Reese were, first, courtesy to customers, and second, learn to know names and faces of all the families who dealt with us. By faithful practice my memory would retain both names and faces and this followed me into the ministry, helped me in meeting strangers and remembering people in my church and other public contacts.

The Spanish-American War broke on us about this time and my interest was aroused and my patriotic zeal stirred to high pitch. Some of my friends who were a year or two older were enlisting and I was determined to go. My youth and size were against me, so I had to content myself by watching others go and writing to them while in service. I wrote to one high official for help in "joining up" and received a consoling reply that "perhaps another war would come in my time"! Certainly, more than one.

My boyish zeal for war died out, but I never could bring myself to absolute pacifism, nor non-resistance, nor to the status of "conscientious objector". I felt strongly that America was justified in her position in both world wars and in the so-called "police action" in Korea in spite of grievous mistakes made both before and during the fighting.

Family considerations and requirements which I was unable to meet prevented enlistment in any of these. In part, my duty was met by voluntary work in Y.M.C.A. Huts in Camp Lee during the first World War. North Street Church, Wheeling, granted me leave of absence for about three months for this service. This was a rewarding experience. I had the opportunity of working with some fine men—both laymen and ministers—especially my boyhood chum in South Wheeling, Clarence Newland, who was "Y" man in charge of one of the units. Some of the lads from my own church were in camp at that time. I spent some time with two of them just before they were shipped overseas—one of them never to return.

The crudities and unnecessary harshness of military and camp life were evident and the boy who stood up against it had to have good moral and religious stamina. The lad who did not return told me this just before he left. Singing as they marched was often in order, but some of the songs were mingled with profanity. He wouldn't join in those and one of his officers yelled at him one day, "What the —— the matter with you—you afraid to swear"? The young soldier said "Of course, I couldn't answer him, so I said nothing, but I didn't sing. I never swore in my life and did not intend to start then." I was able to comfort his mother with this story when the news reached her of her boy's death.

Just before I resigned from the college, a young ministerial student came in one day to argue with me about his pacifist position. After talking for sometime, I said "I respect your attitude as a conscientious objector, and you are fully entitled to your opinion. I ask you to respect my position and give me the right to my opinion—I am a conscientious fighter."

Both our sons served in the Army during World War II, spending most of their time overseas in Italy. Neither one suffered any injury although both had close hazards. We visited them in Camp Foster, Tenn., and were pleased to find camp conditions much better than in the First World War. I felt that there was a greater degree of respect for the enlisted men and more care for their moral and spiritual welfare. There was a better attitude toward the chaplains than in the previous war. In fact, there were so few chaplains in the camps in World War I that had it not been for the Y Huts and their volunteer forces, the men would have had little or no religious influence. I baptized quite a number of men and sent their names to their home churches during my three months in Camp Lee.

The breaking of home ties to face the hardships and uncertainties of combat duty, with the best training and care possible is still a horrible experience, and I did my best to strengthen the morale of my own as well as that of other boys and their families.

About the time our boys left the States, I wrote them:
"The war has broken into the cherished plans of millions of human lives. We are included in the vast number affected. I am glad that you have not flinched in the face of duty as it has presented itself. I love this country. It is my home, and has given my ancestors for several generations back the chance to live and love and work and play; it has given me the same chance, and the same opportunity is yours. I have a feeling that "My country" is "*Me*", your country is "*You*"; that is, more than the land and the buildings and all things material are the human beings and the human institutions which we have developed. We are a part of these. I wanted to enlist in the Spanish-American War, but was too young. In World War I, the government did not ask for men with families, nor did it make provision for as many chaplains as now. So the best I could do was the voluntary work in Camp Lee. Now I am too old for military service. I am not a pacifist nor a conscientious objector; if I *could be*, I would be a conscientious fighter."

CHAPTER III

What About That Preaching Business?

ALL WAS NOT PLAY AND WORK and school during that decade in South Wheeling. There was much of the "all things working together" for my religious development. The wholesome influence of the rural community from which the family had come, and the strict religious habits of our home, had much to do with fixing ideas in my mind. I do not remember when I did not pray, nor when I did not believe in God and in Jesus. In later years I have often wished I had that same implicit trust in God, unmixed with incipient doubts, fears and questions.

My father set the pattern of belief in his own trusting attitude and habits. His family prayers may have had certain repetition of words and phrases current in that day, but there was no doubt in his mind, nor in ours, that he believed God was near and that He heard his supplications. However, I discovered that to have a faith vital and sufficient to help a man serve his fellowmen who may be utterly lacking in religious confidence one must face all doubts and possible questions. That early training kept me from straying too far. In practical living I was no "little angel". Bad habits of the street did fasten

into me, the worst of which was profanity. This, mixed with a nasty temper, moved me a long way from a model youngster.

One experience which had a good effect on me was a rebuke for my profanity by a neighbor boy slightly older than myself. One day when I let go some rather strong language in his presence he looked startled and said, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself for 'cussing' like that". I reminded him that he did the same, and he answered, "But I hear that at home all the time, and you don't".

Considering the number of open saloons and the prevalence of beer drinking among our neighbors, I was fortunate in not picking up that habit. Sometimes I had to deliver groceries to a saloon keeper's home and had to go in the saloon to collect. The owner was a good natured fellow and once offered me a drink, which I refused.

The grosser sins of the flesh I escaped, but not the sins of the spirit against which I had to fight continually. I regularly attended church services and Sunday School, and at that time Sunday was a full day: Class meeting at 9:30, worship at 10:30, Sunday school in the afternoon and evening worship at 7:30. The Senior Epworth League met Sunday evening before worship. The Junior Epworth League met Friday afternoon after school. For the most part I attended all these according to age interest. Yes, and there was Wednesday night prayer meeting. Much attendance of meetings was a "weariness to the flesh", but there were compensations not entirely religious. It was a time to get together and the young folks enjoyed the singing, the "pairing off", and the walks home with the girls, and occasionally stopping at some home for another half hour or so of talk and song.

The movies hadn't arrived nor the automobiles, nor the road houses and juke boxes. Church life had its restraining influence and no doubt did much to keep me respectable. It also had a positive effect in deepening good impressions and convictions. Gradually, there came the feeling that a more complete surrender of my life must be made and that a more satisfactory religious experience was possible.

Then came the frightening suspicion that if a complete consecration were made I would have to preach. Once, I recall, when a young man from our church who was in training for the ministry preached for us, I listened intently and was much impressed. Occasionally I would think that I would really like to do as he did. But there were other considerations not so agreeable. The years of study and preparation, the moving about from place to place, low salary, and perhaps most distasteful of all was having to live in property which was not my own. This last notion no doubt was born in my mind by the frequent moving of my family. I wanted a home of my own and felt certain that I never could have that as a wandering Methodist preacher.

During a revival meeting conducted by Rev. Bleakley, who was then pastor, my uneasiness and lack of satisfaction increased until one day I took time out from work in the store and went into the basement stockroom and there, among the barrels and boxes, wrestled with my conviction and prayed for relief. Finally, I made a kind of surrender which for the time seemed to bring release. It was a sort of bargain with the Lord, that if my *salvation* depended upon it I would preach. I realized afterwards that it was a forced surrender, nothing very joyous or willing about it. However, it was a step in the right direction and brought some peace of mind.

Later in the day I related my experience to my Mother and told her my decision to enter the ministry. The memory of her brief and spontaneous words in reaction to my story made a deep impression. She said simply: "I am glad: we always wanted one of you boys to preach, and before you were born, your father prayed that God would call you. I was afraid you wouldn't do it. You can't preach without an education, and I haven't a cent to give you; but I reckon if God wants you He'll make the way. I will always pray for you." And she always did pray for me to the end of her days. The scores of letters which she wrote during my years in school, whether long or short, always ended the same—"I'm praying for you".

However, it wasn't long after the revival closed, that I tried to rationalize that experience. After all, how did I *know* that I had qualifications for the ministry? Where was the money coming from for my schooling? Perhaps, after all, the Lord was just trying me out to see if I *were willing* to preach. Could I not follow a business career as I wanted to do, make money, do good with it, perhaps far more good than I could in the ministry? So I debated with myself, just about gave the matter up, became less interested in church affairs, and of course less contented.

Then one night something happened. The seasonal revival came again and by way of preparation the pastor asked that all the Christians in the service that Sunday evening gather about the altar for a consecration service. Along with three companions I went to the front and sang the hymns and knelt in prayer. When the service closed, we stood for awhile outside along the curb talking. Someone in the group said he felt that his place was down at the altar rather than standing around among those who were supposed to be really Christians. We all agreed to what was said.

One of God's choice characters, a very devout teacher in the Sunday School, came by and with an uncanny understanding stopped in front of us with the query "What's troubling you boys?" We told her and she quickly said "come on up to my house and we'll talk it over". We trailed along and there in Miss Rose Ann Lewis' home we had a prayer meeting.

Much that she said has been forgotten. She read the Fifty-first Psalm, and interpreted it to us emphasizing the verse, "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation". She said she didn't think that we were bad boys, or had lost everything, but that we hadn't reached the place where there was joy in His service. "Let us pray for the joy of His salvation". So we did. A definite and satisfying peace came to the four of us, and never left. Each of us, in the years since, have had seasons of darkness and sorrows but that experience has remained a steady memory.

We left the house rather late that night. We talked as we walked until I was alone, living the farthest away. With the

burning, refreshing experience still exulting my soul, suddenly with such startling distinctness as to seem like an audible voice, these words came to me "What about the preaching business?" I stopped in my tracks and replied, "Yes, Lord, that too!" From that moment on preaching was my business and no longer a calling to be feared, or shunned, but one to which I was to give my best strength and in which I was to find great joy. Never again did the ministry seem to me a duty which I had to perform, but a service which I was glad to give.

The problem of preparation was still to be solved. Some Bible study and other reading could be done at home, but more definite direction was, of course, necessary, so prayer was coupled with inquiry and practical planning. My brother-in-law, Frank Hubbs, through a friend of his, secured a loan of \$250, part of which I used on repairs to Mother's house, and the rest went toward my first term in school in 1901, and I was on my way.

Much has been said and written about "the Call" to the ministry, in all of which there has been quite a mixture of good sense, humor, and plain foolishness. Some have claimed almost miraculous events affecting their decision; others have come to the ministry through long and gradual process of reflection, conversations, and arguments with friends, and mostly with themselves. Some have made the decision early in life, and some later, too late in some instances to get the proper training.

Both from my own experience, which I have given somewhat in detail, and from observation of the varied experiences of many other ministers, I feel that the important factor is not either external conditions nor subjective emotions but the development of a strong conviction and desire to preach the Gospel. Anything short of this divine urge is insufficient to guarantee a genuinely successful and happy career in the ministry. One's own reason and study of both physical and mental qualifications must help in arriving at a decision. The traditional phrasing, Gifts and Graces, in the Methodist Discipline cannot be improved upon. There have been, and are at present in all denominations terrible misfits in the ministry, men who have

few "gifts and graces" and utterly lacking in determination and discipline towards improvement of what meager talents they possess.

A young man was once recommended by his pastor and Quarterly Conference for license to preach. He was not only anxious for the license but was insistent about an appointment as a supply pastor. He had a speech difficulty, was rather badly crippled in legs and arms, and had very little education. One day we had a long conversation together in which I kindly pointed out his difficulties and assured him that the Lord would accept any reasonable service he could render, which would be most likely in his own local church where all the people knew him, and respected his thorough consecration. That is where he is to this day and contented.

"Thorough consecration," the expression just used, is as essential for all who would be ministers as for any person who would be a devoted Christian and servant of Christ in any capacity. Men have again and again sought my help in some of their ministerial problems, and I have had a feeling that, in most cases, the real trouble was at the point of dedication. One who is to be Christ's ambassador must be willing to do extra and sometimes unpleasant things for His sake, and also to deny one's self certain things which in themselves may not be sinful, but which are of no value in wholesome example or in spiritual culture. These considerations were in embryo in my thinking both before and during the years of my preparation, and caused me to examine my attitudes a few times.

The Y.M.C.A. had a strong appeal for me. I was active in the college association, and, had become acquainted with leaders in the wider organization through attendance at conventions and summer conferences. It was at Lakeside, Ohio, that I first saw and heard John R. Mott and Robert E. Speer, who greatly impressed me by their consecration, and by their faith in the values of the association. Some of my close friends, especially one of my boyhood chums, one of the "three" with me that Sunday night at Miss Lewis' home, became secretaries or assistants in Y.M.C.A. work. I spent one summer as an as-

sistant in the Wheeling Association. My feeling has not changed concerning the opportunity for Christian service in the organization, but it seemed to me then that my field was the ministry.

Again, teaching and religious journalism, each presented great potentials for life work. Perhaps my experience was not much different from many another young man facing the challenge of various vocations, but to me the choice was a real problem. I tried hard to balance my qualifications with the opportunities offered and always came back to the ministry. Strange as it may seem to others, I couldn't get away from the experience that night on the street in Wheeling when I answered the question, "How about that preaching business?"

CHAPTER IV

My First Charge

ONE MORNING in 1900 or 1901, before I entered Wesleyan, a Wheeling newspaper carried the story of the trial of a Methodist minister who was serving a circuit in the Wheeling District. He was charged with immoral conduct and proven guilty. The incident created no end of comment throughout the region, especially in the community where the incident occurred, resulting in a distrust of all ministers.

My mother said, "Well I hope you will never be sent *there*." I agreed that it would not be at all pleasant. In the fall of 1905 I was admitted "on trial" in the West Virginia Annual Conference, (M. E. Church), and appointed to the Cameron Circuit. When I remembered what had happened in one of the communities in the bounds of that Circuit, I suddenly felt a cold chill run up my spine. However, the thrill of getting started in my life work made me determined to make the best of the situation. I was young, unmarried, inexperienced in the responsibility of "pastoring" and entirely on "my own!"

Some good coaching had come my way under one of the more devoted and faithful ministers who ever served the church, Rev. Gregory Bleakley, a native of Ireland. If ever there were a "Father in the Ministry" to any boy, Gregory Bleakley was that to me. I sometimes went with him as he made pastoral

calls and noted his kindly sympathetic attitude towards his parishioners, and marked his sincerely religious interest in people. He gave me my first lesson in tolerance of human weaknesses, which helped me many a time in evaluating men and women in their strange contortions of conduct.

A certain woman of my boyhood congregation was exceedingly devout and demonstrative in her public worship and speech, whether in exhortation which she frequently took the opportunity to impart, or in prayer when the occasion was given. She seemed to possess a severe and dominating disposition which was reflected upon her family, especially towards her husband who showed evidence of her "henpecking". We younger "fry" rather resented her and sometimes made uncomplimentary remarks about her.

Once I mentioned this inconsistency to Pastor Bleakley, and this was his comment: "Brother Roy, if it were not for the grace of God, she would be a *terrible* woman". So we should often thank God for the progress made towards perfection and sainthood, even though the goal is never reached.

Another time I discussed with this good man the emotional excesses of some folks, whether or not "high emotion" should be used as a gauge for depth or fervency of spiritual interest. Neither he nor I were much inclined in that direction, and at that time it bothered me somewhat. His answer was this: "Have you ever noticed that when you pound on an *empty* barrel, the sound is louder than when you hit a *full* one?"

This tolerance, or perhaps a better word, *understanding*, I found to be a developing factor in my experience—that is, by use it became more and more valuable in varied situations and associations. While serving as district superintendent there was a pastor whom I had known since the beginning of my ministry, and for whom I had a very definite aversion. Certain crudities in both appearance and habits had put a cloud over his fine virtues of loyalty to the church and devotion to duty. He was put to a severe test when in the conference adjustments he landed where he didn't want to go and where certain of the officials didn't want him. There were no moral grounds for

their opposition, just plain prejudice. They threatened to lock both church and parsonage against him, and told him so.

He was well toward the end of his ministry and quite naturally terribly distressed over the situation. He said "Do you expect me to go there?" I replied "Certainly. I have informed the officials that they cannot legally do what they say, and that you will be there next Sunday. If they lock the Church door you will preach from the Church steps; if they lock the parsonage door, you may force it open for it is your home". He replied, "Very well, I will be there". He was there that next Sunday and every Sunday for two years, and could have stayed longer had he so desired. Through close association with him I learned that early environment and harsh circumstances had much to do in forming his habits, as well as in developing some of his sterling qualities.

If it be true that a child learns more in the first four to six years of his life than in any other similar period, then I would say that a young minister should learn more in the first pastorate or the first few years of his ministry than in any similar period of his professional career. The aftermath of the scandal referred to in the beginning was lingering. My first service at that place was on a Sunday night. The train brought me there in late afternoon. I can never forget the queer sensation, half fear and half excited-wonder, as to my reception. The village was small, only about two dozen homes, and all the break there was in the monotony of the community was the coming and going of the "local" train. Nearly everybody was lined up along the platform to see who got off and who got on. I was one of the "getters off" and felt quite certain that all eyes were on me. Somehow the feeling wouldn't leave me that they were comparing me with the other young man who dropped in there a few years before. Nobody seemed very cordial, nor very anxious to get acquainted.

One man was close enough for me to speak to him. His figure is as clear to me today as that Sunday afternoon—medium height, a little heavy set, round face, black mustache, hands jammed into his trouser pockets, a crumpled black felt hat,

with the brim pulled down all around so that I could barely see his eyes squinting at me.

I asked him where a certain family lived.

His answer was none too kindly in tone: "The last house past the platform: go on down, *speck* you'll find some one". I had been told that the lady of this home was a fine Christian woman and very active in the church, and indeed she was. She met me at the door and gave me a warm welcome to the community and to her home. My surprise came when later I discovered the man I met on the platform was her husband!

That coldness he displayed on our first meeting was not temporary, nor due to shyness. He just didn't like preachers. That dislike was augmented by the misconduct of a former pastor. I am bound to record that the same coolness spread over the little village. I noticed how the families held off; how through the corner of my eye I could see window shades move back cautiously and doors open a wee bit so those inside could get a squint at the new animal in their midst.

Mr. ——— avoided speaking to me even in his home and wouldn't eat with me. After several weeks I ceased my visits in that home. The time came in winter for special services, and Mrs. ——— asked me to make her home my headquarters, and in a straight forward way, asked why I had not been staying in her home. With terrible bluntness but with perfect honesty, I said "Because I will not stay in any home where the head of the family does not welcome me".

I was immediately sorry I had said that for her eyes filled with tears as she said, "You should not treat me that way; my husband is peculiar, but this home is as much mine as his, and I want you here for the sake of my children". She had a daughter and two sons all in their teens. I relented and made her home my home most of the time when in town.

Well, here is the sequel to that episode. I looked for some way to break down the barrier which he had set up. One evening when we came into the house after church service, he was playing checkers with one of the boys. Instead of going to my room, I put off my overcoat and sat down to watch the game.

Presently I said, "I'll play the winner" which startled both of them, but it was the boy who found his voice and said simply, "It will be you and Dad, for he always wins".

Well, we put our knees together and the checkerboard between us and started the game. I have thought since that my bold intrusion and the close proximity to a preacher disturbed him until he couldn't think well, for the game was mine. Rather curtly he said, "Only one — got to play three". He won the next two games, but more important I won the man. He ate breakfast with me the next morning. We became good friends; he looked forward to my coming, he helped me in doing things about the church building, and occasionally would come to service.

Always, when I think of that town and that family I contrast the last Sunday I was there two years later—with that first Sunday. It was the same afternoon train that brought me, the same crowd along the platform, but my feet had scarcely left the car step when a big friendly voice boomed out "Hey, Preacher, you going down with me?" and there stood the same man almost as I saw him first, except that he had pulled one hand out of his pocket to shove it high up in the air to attract my attention.

What effect did the scandal already mentioned have upon my ministry? I think that it worked for good both to me and to the community. I was more careful and rigid in my actions than I might otherwise have been. I was determined that no occasion for criticism would be given. My first sermon was on the text, "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified"—(Cor. 2:2)—so I had to live up to that.

Family connections had something to do with my acceptance on that charge. My Uncle James McCuskey was a hardware merchant in Cameron and had many good friends throughout that section of the county. Two other brothers of my father, Virgil and Milton, also lived in Cameron, and both of my sisters had married men from the community. As time

went on I was welcomed in all the homes, and I believe broke down the prejudice that existed toward preachers.

A young man about my age was teaching school in this same village. We became good friends, talked much about many things, more particularly life work. He was debating between teaching or the ministry. The ministry won out and H. B. Moose became a successful pastor, first in the West Virginia Conference and later in the Pittsburgh Conference.

For a small community there were a variety of denominations represented; among them two which I met for the first time, The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, commonly called "Mormons" which they resented, and the Universalist. There was little or no clashing among the citizens over their religious beliefs and occasionally all would drop into our services.

Years later, in the last church I served, one of its officials was a man whom I had baptized and received into that village church when he was a boy. His mother was a widow, and he was the eldest of three boys. She had been reared in a strict immersionist denomination but her good sense and deep religious interest in her boys made it easy for her to want the children trained in Sunday School and Church. We had several conversations about church and religious subjects, and she was happy to permit the boy to unite with the church and accept the prevailing practice of the Methodists in baptism. It was understood that if when he became older should he be dissatisfied about the mode of baptism, he could be immersed. These and many other experiences in that first charge gave me fine training in tolerance. There is possibly another incident which should be added.

There was another church on this charge which was known as a "Union" Church. Here several denominations were included. At that time the Methodists and the Disciples, better known around there as the "Campbellites", were the only ones with regular pastors. The minister of the Disciple Church was a young man like myself and quite congenial. We decided to hold a two-week meeting together. Some of his group did not like

the idea very well. One day he told me that some of them were saying that we were going to "debate" the question of baptism. He said he told them they had already had too much baptism for their spiritual good.

Clouston Church took its name from Mr. William Clouston, an old settler in the community whose house stood near if not on the location of the present building. As in many cases in pioneer days, a "class" was formed and the first "meeting" place of the embryo church was in someone's home. So it happened with "Uncle Billy Clouston".

When my Uncle James McCuskey, was a boy in his teens, he worked for Mr. Clouston, and one day Uncle Billy said, "James, how is it with your soul"? and when he didn't give a very satisfactory answer, the good man said "come into the house this evening for class meeting". My Uncle did, and was converted and united with the Methodist Church.

Years later when one of the Presbyterian ministers in the town of Cameron, attempted to twit Uncle James about "straying away from" the Presbyterian fold, and reminded him that two of his brothers in the town were elders in the church, he got this reply: "I worked for two or three Presbyterian men and then for Uncle Billy Clouston, and he was the only one who talked to me about my soul. That's why I have always been a Methodist".

The Clouston Community was made up of good substantial farmers. There were four families by the name of Hicks with whom I stayed frequently — James, Charley, Josephus and Anderson — more often with James because he lived on the hill about half way between Cameron and the church. At my first service there on a Sunday morning, James' daughter began introducing me to the different people present. I remarked about the repetition of the names Hicks, Buzzard and Fletcher. She said, "Yes there are a lot of them here and I'll tell you something—you'd better say nothing about any of us, for we are all related". That I found out was a good warning. The first funeral I ever conducted was for Charley Hicks who unexpectedly died one morning of a heart attack.

Charley was a wholesome Christian character, and I leaned on him for practical advice. I had been in Wesleyan three years, but was obliged to stay out and "catch up" on finances, which was the real reason for asking for an appointment at the 1905 Conference. I wanted the worst in the world to go back and get my degree so I told Charley my troubles. He said "Why don't you do both, stay on the Circuit and go back and forth on the train?" He ventured another comment or two that the churches could get along without "revival services for one year" and that "it would be worth all they paid me, if I could come and preach to them and live among them" as I was doing. His words encouraged me greatly and so I went back for a second year. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad got a lot of my salary that year. The distance covered about 250 miles both ways from Buckhannon to Cameron and my feet did the work from the town to the churches.

In addition to the churches on the charge at that time, a new one was started. There lived in the Loudenville Community a farmer-school teacher named J. P. Bonar, better known as "Pal" Bonar, who was my first teacher when I started to school at Big Run. He organized a Sunday School in the school house at Loudenville, and I began to preach regularly there. After I left the charge the people built a neat little church.

In the Fall of 1907 I was sent to the Holly Grove Circuit in Upshur County. The railroad distance was shorter but the circuit was larger. There were eight churches with preaching at another point once each month. This was quite a new experience. The churches were rather widely scattered and the hills were high. There was farming and timbering and at one point a silica sand operation.

The people were hospitable and kind, and opened their doors and hearts to the new preacher, but not without misgivings. One old gentleman looked me over, and "allowed" that I would be swallowed up in a snow drift before the winter was over.

In another church when I went in for the first service and faced the congregation I noticed one woman. She put her hand

to her mouth and whispered to another woman, and they both shook with laughter. It was terribly disconcerting, and I was quite certain some remark was made about me. Sometime, about six months later, I saw the mother of the whispering woman and she asked me if I knew what her daughter had said about me that first Sunday. I replied "No, but I was certain she said something". Well, all she said was this—"Stung again!" I couldn't blame her much; for that matter, couldn't blame anyone else for doubts, because I was young looking, rather skinny, and to make matters worse pretty self-conscious. I had a lot to overcome and set out to do that. I exerted myself to visit in their homes and tried not to visit twice in succession in any one home. In that way, I got into almost all the homes of my people during the year. I discovered some homes where a preacher had never been, or had not visited for a long, long time.

It was always a problem with me how to repay people for personal kindnesses which were so graciously shown me. Once when this was mentioned to a man who had befriended me again and again, and in whose humble home I had spent many a pleasant hour, his simple reply was, "I have done for you what I would want someone to do for my boy if he were away from home; just pass it along". Years later I was able to help some of his grandchildren through college.

The day of the Circuit Rider, as he was known in West Virginia, was passing away. The circuits were not quite so large nor the churches so widely scattered. I never owned a horse, but did not refuse to ride one if a farmer would lend one, or I could hire one. It so happened that one such good churchman often harbored me over night and let me use one of his animals to ride to an afternoon appointment. One day there came into my office at Wesleyan an elderly woman with a young teen-age girl. The usual remark "I don't suppose you know me" was quickly followed by the statement, "I am Bob Rexroad's widow and this girl is my daughter's child". Of course, I remembered her home and her husband whose horse I had ridden. We helped

that granddaughter through college and she became my secretary.

A layman who served the West Virginia Conference for years as treasurer of the Conference Board of Missions was the late Homer Wiseman of Elkins. I remember as of only last night, the night Homer as a fifteen or sixteen year old lad knelt at the altar of one of the churches on that circuit and was converted.

At the close of my two years on the Cameron Circuit, I felt chagrined that there were so few visible results in the way of additions to the Church. What was the reason—poor preaching, lack of faith, ignorance of evangelistic “know how”? Perhaps some of all three. I prayed that in the new charge I might prove my call to the ministry by larger ingathering. On that score the success was better. In one of the churches the Lord honored our work by reviving the entire community and uniting a divided church.

This was my first experience with any of the small divisive sects which have wrought havoc in small churches. A group led by a sort of renegade preacher who had previously belonged to two or more denominations came into the little community and spread confusion. Several families were drawn away which weakened the small church. During a two-week service there were many conversions among whom were members of the disaffected families.

During the services, we took occasion to refer to the division caused by this wandering preacher and mildly condemned the people for running after every strange doctrine which came along. Meanwhile, I discovered that the preacher had left his wife and family and was not supporting them. I exposed him to the congregation one night, and suggested that they would be doing the neighborhood a good turn if some of the men would call on him and tell him his welcome had run out. About a week later while holding a meeting in another church, some folks came to see me, and at the close of the service that night they said “Well, we did it and that fellow is gone”. All but one

of the families came back, and I never heard anything more about the affair.

It was on this charge that I heard for the first time some "Mountain Hymns" or religious folk-songs. Granville D. Sayre knew most of them, both music and words, a few of which we never found in print. During my years at Wesleyan he was then past eighty and living near Buckhannon. I introduced him to Miss Marie Boette, teacher in the music department, who helped him record one or more of these songs. She later used these with others which she collected as the basis of her thesis for an advanced degree in music from Ohio University, Athens, Ohio.

One of these songs which I well remember was used as the closing hymn of our revival meetings:

"Well, brothers, now our meetin's broke,
And brothers we must part,
And if I never more see you
I'll love you in my heart;
And we'll shout on that shore,—
and we'll shout forevermore."

You could have as many stanzas as you could find words to substitute,—(sisters, fathers, etc.) for "Brothers". It was usually an emotional climax to our services, not without a strong undertone of seriousness which remains in memory with a bit of sad sweetness.

CHAPTER V

From 2 Thirty-ninth Street, Wheeling, to Boston and Return

MY LAST NIGHT on the Holly Grove Circuit was spent in the home of Granville Sayre. Early Monday morning he harnessed his horse to the buggy and took me over to Alton for the train back to Buckhannon, and from there to Wheeling, to 2 Thirty-ninth Street. I had sent a lot of letters to that address and had spent many an hour there. It was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Isador Fulton and their two daughters, Jessie and Leah, a family active in the Third Presbyterian Church located in the block south of the Wesley Methodist. The young people of the two churches were thrown together in the public schools and in church groups. These two churches held Sunday School picnics together which furnished excellent opportunities for fellowship and sprouting romances.

Such a romance between the older Fulton girl and myself developed in that way. We were in our late 'teens when we met. The family was congenial but rigid in religious practices, so all church services had to be attended. Mr. Fulton was

superintendent of the Sunday school, an elder in the church and secretary of the session. Mrs. Fulton and Leah sang in the choir and Jessie worked in the primary department of the Sunday school. It was *the rule* that if I were to spend any time at the house on Wednesday or Sunday nights it would be after prayer meeting or evening church service. Sometimes we attended together in one or the other of the two churches.

Only in retrospect can we properly evaluate the impact of various experiences upon our life and work. The influence of this Christian family, the quiet, kindly, steady attitude, broad sympathies and church loyalty of Mr. and Mrs. Fulton did as much for me as for their daughters. Their friendly and lovable pastor was Rev. James Leyenberger, known to all the young folks as "Uncle Jim". When it was known that the ministry was my goal, I found encouragement from these Presbyterian friends, but never once any suggestion that I might do better, or would be welcome in that denomination.

At their home I met other ministers besides their pastor. One was Rev. Lester, retired from his first and only pastorate at West Alexander, Pa. He supplied the pulpit for Rev. Leyenberger one Sunday and was entertained in the Fulton home. I had the privilege of meeting him and when he learned my name he said, "I knew a Wm. McCuskey in theological seminary," and he seemed to be pleased to know that I was the nephew of his early school friend. We talked together about his long pastorate of 44 years at West Alexander. Fresh from theological school, he was called to this church, accepted and never left. From that church during his pastorate had gone ministers and missionaries equal to the years of his pastorate. One of them I came to know shortly afterwards, Rev. Pollock who was pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Buckhannon.

Two impressions from my contact with Rev. Lester that evening never left me, the productiveness of one man's ministry over a long period in the same church and his familiarity with the Holy Scripture with which he seemed to be saturated.

As our friendship ripened, my visits increased in frequency and soon a "full blown" romance and courtship was in progress.

Jessie taught in the grades in one of the Wheeling schools, and I was following my courses in college from 1901 to 1908. Marriage was deferred, not because we were not anxious enough but because finances were too uncertain. An older student for whom I had great respect, in one of the meetings of the Ministers Club, said "Set yourselves like a stone wall against marriage until you are through college". He spoke from hard experience in supporting himself. I built my "stone wall"!

The religiously conscientious attitude of my fiancée had a good deal to do with the deferment of matrimony. She was not sure about her ability to meet the responsibilities of a minister's wife. In fact, there were lurking some conscientious scruples in my own mind about pressing the matter when I couldn't see a too brilliant future. Salaries were low and the Methodist preacher was still "itinerating"! It really took a good deal of *nerve* to ask any young woman to leave a comfortable home and share the uncertainties of a roving preacher's life.

However, as time passed, and both of us saw more clearly the brighter and more alluring phases of the ministry, as well as a growing sense of our need of each other—maybe I had better say *my need* of her—there was less of uncertainty and fear of marriage. Here again, the fine attitude of her parents came into play.

When I finally gathered my courage to mention the matter to Mr. Fulton, he surprised me by what he said: "We have expected this: You are both old enough to know your own mind, and if that is what you want to do, it is all right with us". He followed that with a bit of advice, that I be not too ambitious to hold large churches, or go into work which would take me too much away from home. He was a traveling salesman and had missed much of home life.

Circumstances in my subsequent career forced me to ignore that good advice. The night of our wedding as we were leaving the house, he said to me "When you are settled in a pastorate write me and I'll send you Jessie's church letter". So, she first became a member of the Methodist Church in Hingham, Mass.

We were married Wednesday night, September 9, 1908, and left after the wedding ceremony for Boston where I was to enroll as a student in Boston University School of Theology. We did not return to West Virginia until I had graduated in 1911. Those were three very lovely and rewarding years, which neither of us ever regretted. We were, of course, forced to observe strict economy. I had saved a little from my last year on Holly Grove Circuit, and my wife had saved from her last year's teaching, but all put together did not amount to much. Claude Goodwin, who had been in Boston one year and had married during the summer, suggested that we pool our finances and find an apartment where we could cook and eat together and this we did. I supplied a few times in Congregational Churches, and in February, 1909, was appointed as student supply in Hingham, Mass., where we remained until 1911.

The Hingham Church was a small congregation, but kinder, more sympathetic people I never met. The salary was \$400 the first year, and it was raised to \$600 the second year. Since I had to commute to Boston four days in the week, the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad got quite a bit of my salary. But the people were generous in other respects, and we never lacked real necessities. They were especially considerate of the parson's wife. They knew it was her first experience in a parsonage, and did not require too much of her effort.

One of our interesting experiences in Hingham was with a group of Italian young men who wanted to learn English. We formed them into a class and with the help of another young couple met with them one or two nights each week. I asked the official board to grant the privilege of meeting the boys in one of the Sunday school class rooms. The request caused quite a debate. I discovered that race prejudice was not confined to the Negro. One man, the father of several girls, expressed the fear that one of those "Ill smelling Dagos might want to go with his daughter". But consent was finally, if reluctantly, given.

We got some help from a local Italian merchant, who was quite thrilled that we were willing to do something for his

fellow countrymen but got himself snarled with the local Roman Catholic priest who was Irish. The priest came into the merchant's store one day and announced that he would no longer trade with him because the merchant was "running" to The Methodist Church. Peter was quick and positive with an answer: "That's all right, you don't have to trade with me. I go to whatever church I dam please". Later, when Peter's first baby was born he suggested slipping it away some day from his wife, who was a devout Catholic, and bringing it to me for baptism which, of course, I wouldn't do, telling him that such procedure would cause trouble in his home.

Hingham was interesting to us because of its historic background. Only a short while before we went there, Ida Tarbell had traced the lineage of Abraham Lincoln to one of the three men by that name who were among the first settlers of the town, from Hingham, England, in 1635. There were Lincolns in our Church, and others of the name living in the town and quite a number who traced their ancestry back to those first settlers. There was in 1909 a reunion of descendants of John Tower, on the 300th anniversary of his birth, and I was invited to take part in the program at the site of his grave.

April 6, 1910, our first child, John Fulton, was born in the parsonage. Since he was the first parsonage baby for years and years, he became quite popular and the people were more than ever kind and helpful to us. Both baby and mother were well cared for.

In the beginning of this chapter I mentioned my wife's early reticence to assume the responsibilities of a minister's partner. She never completely recovered from that uneasiness, but it saved her from making the mistake which some parsonage queens have made, namely, assuming the role of "queen" of the congregation. She was slow to accept leadership in organizations, believing that it was more important to train leaders who were a permanent part of the congregation. She was willing to "fill in" and to do her share in less conspicuous places, teaching sometimes in church school, helping to organize missionary and other groups.

She felt that her main function was in the home and here she presided with dignity and grace. Her life and influence reacted much to my own good, and to that of our children. Somehow, her quiet but positive Christian character reached out into the congregation and community. One good woman in a certain church we served paid her a well deserved compliment even though her emphasis reflected slightly against me. She said, "I tell you Brother McCuskey, your wife is a *big help to you*". I was glad to admit it.

Around the turn of the century The West Virginia Conference of the former M. E. Church did not have a large number of theological seminary graduates. The atmosphere was pretty conservative, and we heard much about "higher criticism" and "evolution". There was an attempt by some to make much out of the Mitchell case in Boston School of Theology. Three of us who had been close friends through our days at Wesleyan, J. Elbert Wells, Claude E. Goodwin and myself, decided we were going to seminary and from the start were inclined to Boston. We had some pretty stout opposition and discouragement from some of our older ministers.

Perhaps a few words concerning Prof. Hinckley G. Mitchell will be in order at this point since it is doubtful that many persons of the present generation have ever heard of him. Bishop F. J. McConnell, who defended the professor in two attempts to prove the charge of heresy against him, says that Mitchell was a "storm center for fifteen years."

The controversy was over "higher criticism" in the study of composition, authorship, and interpretation of the Scripture, especially of the Old Testament. This critical study was contrary to the conservative and traditional view. Results of careful and scientific studies of the original manuscripts of biblical literature are now generally accepted. However, in Professor Mitchell's day all of this was new and somewhat startling. Professor Mitchell may have been more dogmatic than his contemporaries.

Bishop McConnell places a high estimate upon him as a man and a friend, but he says that "some of his teaching

trouble arose from the fact that he made the mistake of supposing that students coming from college to theological school were ready at once for advanced post-graduate studies." I never met Professor Mitchell during my three years in Boston (1908-1911), although he was teaching then in another theological school in that area.

An evangelist had been brought to Wesleyan by President Wier who showed some rather hot and unrighteous "righteous indignation" against Professor Mitchell and the whole school on account of him. In a conference with us, he gave the whole Boston set-up a very black eye. One of our professors, whom we admired greatly, had been a student under Professor Mitchell and gave us the impression that he had not yet developed horns. Moreover, he spoke in highest terms of other men who were on the seminary faculty, and we decided to enter if the school would accept us. One man said that if I went to Boston I "would lose all my evangelistic zeal". The other two men preceded me by one year, so all three of us were there two years together.

I have often thought of Bishop Quayle's expression, "polarization of the mind", in connection with contacts which students have with their teachers. How enriching it was to be in classes taught by Sheldon, Buell, Warren, Knudson, Beiler, Cell and Bowne. My most intimate association was with Dr. Knudson. Dr. Bowne died in the beginning of my second year in his classes. Dr. Cell came to Boston during my last year. Dr. Brightman and Irving Beiler were students at the same time. Fred Fisher was preaching in First Church. The first time I ever saw or heard Francis J. McConnell was when he made a matriculation day address at the seminary.

I enjoyed all my work except the "required" year in the Hebrew language. Several of the men were working toward their doctorate in philosophy, and I debated the question for awhile, but finally decided that I was not sufficiently interested in research to put my time into that field. Besides, by then, I was pretty well convinced that the pastorate was my place. I was ordained deacon by Bishop Luther Wilson at the session

of the New England Southern Conference held at Pawtucket, R. I., in the spring of 1909. When the school year ended in the Spring of 1911 we said "Good Bye" to Hingham and Boston and turned our faces toward "the hills of home" back to 2 Thirty-Ninth Street, Wheeling.

There was a feeling of relief that the long grind of academic preparation was over. The routine of courses and study, the quizzes and examinations, the divided interests of college, seminary and pastoral duties, had created some tension and dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, as I look back over that period from November, 1901, when I entered the West Virginia Conference Seminary at Buckhannon, to March, 1911, when I left Boston, I was actually engaged in my life's work.

At that time, as most other students, my vision was fixed too much on the future, and the end of the period of preparation, rather than upon what I was actually doing. From almost the first year, I became a part of the religious and social life of the school and sought to be helpful to my fellow students. During summer vacation I preached some, helped to organize and get underway what is now Hope Church in Wheeling, and worked as a supply pastor every year from 1905 to 1911. I discovered a similar restlessness among students for the ministry, in fact, among too many undergraduates, during my presidency of the college. There was a fidgety anxiety to be through with it all and get into their church work, sometimes completely overlooking the accumulation of facts and the disciplines necessary for their work. It would be much to the advantage of all students if they could understand that the period of preparation is an actual part of their life's work. Then they would do a better grade of work and find more enjoyment in it.

CHAPTER VI

Settling Down To Life Work

A SHORT WHILE before we left Boston a district superintendent in West Virginia had written me to find out whether I would do some work in his district. There was a new coal town developing, and he asked me to go into it and discover possibilities of establishing a church. The mine operators were quite cooperative, asking me to come in right away and open up a sort of social center for the men. However, I learned that in securing certain right of way they went through the church property of another denomination. In return they had given ground in a good location in the new town. I could see no point in setting up a rival organization, and so reported to the district superintendent. He agreed with me but somewhat reluctantly, on the grounds that the other organization was too weak and indifferent to do any thing.

A few weeks later, the same district superintendent asked me to fill out the conference year at West Main Street, Grafton, for L. W. Roberts, my former pastor in Wheeling, whose wife's illness necessitated his moving and subsequent retirement. It was not a large congregation, but an active and devoted group of people. I think I went there in May, so that I had the privilege of working and mingling with the people of that community during the whole summer. We did not move into the

parsonage but Mrs. McCuskey brought John and stayed for two or three weeks. There were a few pieces of furniture in the house—sufficient to “camp.”

There was one family Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Brown, the parents of Dr. Ralph C. Brown, with whom I spent a good deal of time. It was at the Grafton charge that I first met him. He probably thought I was youthful, perhaps “kiddish”, and I felt that he was more mature than his years, so the slight difference in age did not matter. We became close friends almost at once. We made pastoral calls together, visited with the families, and when we got an invitation, we ate with them. We missed it one day when we walked out into the country to visit a family or two, but got nothing to eat until we came back to Browns. His interest in teaching, in church affairs and in the ministry, which he was considering at that time, contributed no little to my contentment and satisfaction during the summer.

Conference met in October, 1911, at which time I was admitted into full connection in the conference, ordained elder by Bishop Berry and appointed to Shinnston. There were three points on the charge at that time: Shinnston, Salt Well and Enterprise. Owings, a coal town of the Consolidation Coal Company, a few miles east of Shinnston, had no religious services nor Sunday school so I went there, and with the help of a fine Christian layman, a foreman in the mine, Ed Vincent, we started what developed into a regular appointment and a small church.

The big problem on this charge was Shinnston itself. The town had become the center of coal, oil and gas operations. Naturally the church had “growing pains” and had undertaken a building program. Splendid work had been done by my predecessor, A. M. Hammond, but for health reasons he did not feel able to continue. The building was partly constructed and was dedicated in March of 1912. We worshiped in the old church which had been built before the Civil War, and lived in the parsonage adjoining. The building program included a new parsonage on the ground purchased for the new church. The buyer of the old church property was demanding the re-

lease of the same in accordance with the agreement in the purchase, but no contract had been let for the new parsonage.

This situation became the cause for an interesting episode. The board of trustees were in disagreement as to the size, kind of building material—brick or frame—and of course, the cost which depended upon the other considerations. They debated it time after time but without decision. Wm. J. S. Harmer, one of the most devoted and loyal laymen I ever knew, wouldn't agree to a good-sized brick parsonage to match the church building because of the cost. George A. Ferguson, an equally devoted and loyal layman, couldn't see any other kind of building. Their arguments were always friendly but positive. I was becoming more and more concerned because I would have to find another place to live by April or May. In one of the meetings Brother Harmer made his speech and closed by saying "Preachers now do not have large families. Look at our pastor, one child—just one." It struck me as quite humorous, so I said "Oh, Brother Harmer, give me time". His good nature came quickly to the front, and after all had had a good laugh, he said "Well, let's get at it and build a good one". So they did and sometime in the Spring of 1912 we moved in. Our other two children were born there. On the day our Leah was born, I met Brother Harmer on the street, and he greeted me with this: "Well, I see you're trying to fill it up!"

In the course of two or three years Shinnston asked to be made a station and increased the salary to \$1500. We remained there five years during which time all indebtedness on the Church and parsonage was paid. Aside from a few former Wesleyan students living in Shinnston, I knew none of the people in the community when I went there in 1911. Five years yielded great returns in lasting friendships. It is only in the stretch of years that a minister can really see the fruits of his work, and he must make good use of all his contacts and associations; even though at the time he can see nothing unusual about his conduct.

As an illustration, there lived across the street from the old parsonage a lovely young woman who frequently came over

to play with our baby. I officiated at her wedding and baptized her first baby. Later, I made the commencement address at Shinnston High School when that child graduated. The next Fall she entered Wesleyan College. Later, I conducted the funeral service of her mother, then gave her her diploma at Wesleyan and officiated at her wedding.

Rev. A. G. Robinson began his preparation for the ministry during my pastorate at Shinnston but his membership was in the Salt Well Church. Another man in the ministry from that community is Rev. J. J. Gross who later transferred to Illinois. A boy, whose mother we knew as a little girl, we were able to help through Wesleyan, and he is now a successful high school teacher. The youngest child I ever received into full connection in the church was at Shinnston. The child's mother came to me one day pretty much perturbed because the little girl but six years old had been coaxing to join the class to be received on Easter. Naturally, the mother felt the child was too young to know what she was doing. I told her that the child could not know *all* that such a step meant but that she knew it was something that was good and right to do. No harm could possibly be done by giving her permission. She was baptized and received into the church, continued faithful in Sunday school and church, went to college, married a fine Christian man and has reared a family of four children all of whom are Christian as their parents are.

It was here on one occasion when I was baptizing little children that Mrs. M. J. Harmer, the aged mother of Mr. Harmer mentioned earlier, made a remark that never left me. She quoted the verse of scripture: "They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our Lord" and commented "I have lived a long while and have never known it to fail".

It was here also that I had to deal with one of the oddest characters I have ever known. The man was well along in years at that time but had been a "thorn in the flesh" of the Methodist Church for years. He was well-read in Scripture and in current events but would do some of the most contemptible

things imaginable, anything at all to annoy the minister or worshippers. He had been arrested a few times and put in jail which apparently delighted him. He called on me and attempted to get me to open up one of his standing quarrels with the church. Certainly I refused to have anything to do with it. Once he came to a service which the late Dr. Goodwin was conducting for me. Goodwin was trying to have the congregation engage in prayer and asked that every head be bowed. This old fellow looked straight at him, and the leader not knowing him at all said "Every head is bowed but one", whereupon this man held up his two fingers and bawled out "Two, Brother". Of course, Goodwin was the other one.

I knew that this fellow often stopped in a certain store to talk with the merchant. One day the merchant told me that he thought the old man wanted me to have him arrested. I told the merchant to tell him the next time he came in, that I would never do that but that I would have him brought up on a lunacy charge if he came back to disturb the church; that he had done enough crazy things about the town to prove that he was insane. The merchant relayed the message, and I never had any more trouble with him.

In the summer of 1914 we spent several weeks at Mountain Lake Park, together with Mrs. McCuskey's parents and her sister. I recall the morning my father-in-law brought in the paper with the headlines about the German Army going through Belgium. He was quite disturbed and remarked that it would be hard to tell where it would end. Soon we were in the first World War. I thought my work was about over at Shinnston and asked the district superintendent to move me at the Conference of 1915. He thought otherwise, and I returned for the fifth year, which proved a good one and permitted me to guide in liquidating all indebtedness on church property. In the Fall of 1916 we were sent to North Street, Wheeling.

This was an old organization and an old building, dating back to days before the Civil War. While the location was in the opposite end of the City in which my wife and I had lived, we had many friends and a number of relatives throughout the

city. Mrs. McCuskey had a circle of acquaintances through her four years in high school and her six years of teaching. Her family was still living at 2 — 39th Street and my brother was living in the city, and one of my sisters with whom my mother made her home. The appointment proved to be a very happy one because of these associations as well as for the work with a loyal group of people. Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Wilson were still living and maintained a lively interest in church affairs. She directed the choir, and Mr. Wilson was treasurer of the church. Their hearts were in the church and had been since childhood for their parents had been the moving spirits in founding the North Street Church. I had preached here twice before, once during the pastorate of Dr. Archibald Moore and once for Dr. S. V. Leach.

Interest in the Epworth League, both the local and conference organization, had been a part of my concern. So in 1917 the conference convention was held at Morgantown, and one of our young men, Arthur Stricklin, and I attended. At this convention the work of an Epworth League Institute was discussed, and it was voted to attempt the organization of one for the Conference. Dr. W. B. Fleming, then president of Wesleyan, offered the facilities of the college for the institute and the first one was held in the summer of 1918. I was on leave of absence from the pulpit for service in Army Y.M.C.A. at Camp Lee but returned for the two weeks of the institute. Thus began a series of summer meetings for young people which grew in numbers and interest until unification of the churches when the entire set up was changed to the M.Y.F. assemblies. The institute and summer assemblies became "feeders" for Wesleyan College and for the ministry and other forms of Christian life service, while scores of men and women are now living richer and more useful lives in the church because of their experiences in these groups.

Conference met in Huntington in 1918, and I went with the full intention of returning to North Street for a third year. The war was still on. Some men had gone into the chaplaincy, several were retiring and a number of changes were being made.

I was entertained in the home of Dr. R. G. Backus, Huntington District superintendent. He began early in the conference to persuade me to go to Seventh Avenue, Huntington, in case C. Fred Anderson moved. I was not very willing to consider it for I felt drawn to North Street. However, both Dr. Backus and Dr. Compton of Wheeling District thought it was a wise move for me, so Anderson became Superintendent of Wheeling District, and I landed in Seventh Avenue. Here was a much stronger church than North Street and in a growing section of the city. North Street was pretty well settled, almost static so far as growth and new families were concerned. It did have a place and a mission in that end of the city of Wheeling, and still does, as the only Protestant church in that entire ward of the city. So far as I could discover, there were no ill feelings on the part of North Street towards me for leaving, and we parted as friends.

The "flu" epidemic began developing in the late summer of 1918 and had reached a stage in Camp Lee where, just one week after I had left, a quarantine on the camp was established. By the time we had moved to Huntington the disease was raging and schools and churches were closed. It was six weeks after conference before I held a service in the church. I met my congregation in homes of sickness and death. It was a gloomy experience and we began to wish we had never left North Street. Our family mercifully escaped the flu during that fall but in the spring of 1919, March, Mrs. McCuskey's father in Wheeling went down with it, and passed away. When we returned from the funeral, Mrs. McCuskey and the three children took the flu suddenly and at the same time. With the help of a doctor and his good wife who was a nurse, we got through. I again escaped and was able to help care for the family and continue regular work at the church.

Seventh Avenue had no building program and no debt. It had a good membership, a host of young people, was located in a growing section of the city, had an evangelistic tradition and atmosphere in which I felt at home, therefore, we looked forward confidently to a happy and productive pastorate. The

war was over, the families were being reunited as the boys came home and good cheer seemed to pervade the city. The congregation was made up largely of middle class folk, workmen in the industrial plants, a few small merchants and school teachers and a banker or two.

The evangelistic efforts both years were quite successful, both in number of conversions and in additions to the church. We did hold special services both years, and evangelistic interest and work continued pretty much through the entire time. The Sunday School and Epworth League joined heartily in our efforts and both prepared the way for final decisions when the meetings were in progress. One year we had close to two hundred conversions and high percentage of accessions. Out of that group of young people came three ministers—Oliver Hatfield, Elvin Hinerman and Arthur Beckett.

There was an element of "Holiness" enthusiasts in the church and in that end of the city. It had been developing over a period of years and had affected several of the churches in that end of the city, causing divisions in some of them. One of the Holiness Churches of that part of the city was made up largely of the disgruntled from the other churches including Seventh Avenue. They were a group of excellent people of good morals, but many of them had lost the spirit of tolerance and sweetness which should always accompany Christian love. Some were imbued with an argumentative spirit which made fellowship with them not too pleasant.

I was reminded of a story told me back in the Shinnston region where at one time one of the radical immersionist groups was prominent. They were much given to disputings. When a certain man had made his profession and was duly immersed he came up from the river to the assembled crowd, shook himself vigorously like a wet dog and announced boldly "Now, I'm ready for 'sputin'". Some of our friends whom I knew in that part of Huntington, and for that matter in other places, as soon as they had received the "blessing of Holiness" were then ready for argument and contention.

One of our devout members had been somewhat carried away by the enthusiasm of some of those who had attached themselves to the Holiness faction. She said to me, "When you hold your meeting I want you to call on Brother —— often to lead in prayer; he's a power in prayer", by which she meant he was quite vociferous. My reply almost took her breath. "I shall probably not call on him to pray as often as on you, for if you are as good a woman as I think you are, your prayers will reach the throne as soon, if not sooner than his". As a former pastor of that congregation had said to me "Those people have mistaken *lung power* for spiritual power".

We had no difficulty with the group whatever. I never argued with them nor "fought" their doctrine from the pulpit. My sermons were straightforward Gospel messages emphasizing the possibilities of lives thoroughly consecrated to Christ, and that in Him there was power to redeem and set men free from evil habits of body and mind. Also, it was my belief and teaching that fellowship in Christ should make us all more congenial and brotherly.

Perhaps as ministers and pastors we are more to blame than we wish to admit for the "splintering off" of the various sects which are found in all parts of our country. Most of them look for, and believe in, a strict mode of Christian living which they do not find too prevalent in many of our churches; moreover, their economic standard of living is lower, and they do not feel at home in our fellowship. We could present a higher type of Christian living, both in preaching and in practicing, and encourage a warmer fellowship in our congregations.

Conference met in 1920 in Moundsville, and I went with the fullest expectations of returning to Seventh Avenue. No other thought was entertained by the family or by the Church. It was my hope to have a long pastorate, but I was headed for a big surprise.

CHAPTER VII

The "Fifth Wheel" in Methodist Administration

AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE of The M. E. Church in 1920 Bishop Francis J. McConnell was appointed to the Pittsburgh Area and presided for the first time in the West Virginia Conference that fall. Some factions which had been developing in the conference had become more acute over the action by which the district superintendents' salaries were equalized. One or two of the district superintendents disapproved the action, and it was charged by others that incorrect reports were made. A bitter argument ensued between two of the men involved, and one was brought to trial for conduct unbecoming a minister. The charge was not sustained but the Bishop felt that the feeling engendered was so intense as to hurt the work of the church in the conference, so one of the superintendents was removed from his district.

I had gone to Wheeling to spend Conference Sunday with my mother, and when I returned to Moundsville that night, one of the men told me that I was to be put on a district. The news worried me. I had no inclination for administrative work and felt that I had little qualification for the superintendency. As I have said, it was my ardent wish to return to Seventh

Avenue; but deeper than these considerations was feeling of "inferiority", more poignant when I thought about dealing with men in the conference who were older than I and more experienced in business matters.

I conferred with one of the older men of the conference, Dr. H. D. Clark, and told him my fears. He said, "You should not cultivate that feeling of inferiority". I reminded him that the Bishop had said nothing to me about this; that I had never met him nor spoken to him, and that I thought I should go to him and tell him that I did not want to go on a district. He advised me not to do that but to accept the appointment, if it came, as a call of the church.

I let the matter rest and on Monday the appointments were read and my name was called for the Parkersburg District. I met and shook hands with Bishop McConnell for the first time in a brief meeting with the cabinet immediately following the adjournment of the conference. All I got from him at that time was a slight smile and the comment "Some of the men on that district may think I am a holy terror: do your best and write me when you wish."

He was correct. Some of the men, both preachers and laymen, didn't fail to express their disapproval of the change that he made. One layman wrote him a pretty stiff letter in which appeared this statement: "Putting McCuskey on the district is like blotting out the sun and putting a tallow candle in its place." The Bishop thought that was a "good one" and frequently mentioned it when we were together years after. I countered with a "crack" at him which the deposed district superintendent once made to me. By chance we met on a train and the brother said, "Have you read McConnell's book, 'Is God Limited?' ". I said "Yes". He said, "The Bishop is a great thinker. I like to read his books. But he's a darned poor administrator". The Bishop's only comment on that was "Well, he ought to know".

I will be eternally grateful for the six years' association and close contact with the great mind and soul of Bishop McConnell. My appointment to the district was another of the "all things working together for good" to myself. I gained immeasurably

by observing two of the Bishop's most outstanding qualities: his keen sense of justice and fairness, and his great patience in dealing with people. Time and again he would sit with committees, or preachers long after night service, listening to their stories and reasoning with them before making up his mind.

He was regarded by most people as cold and unemotional; at heart he was not. He had learned to control himself. He once said that in his early days as Bishop he got his "fingers burnt" by talking too freely, so he "closed up".

My own impression of him at first was that he was rather cold. In that first conference when he was presiding in executive session he cautioned the brethren to be careful in their speech and not give way to their emotions, adding "I am trying not to be emotional at all" and I whispered to our mutual friend, "Bill" Stidger, "He doesn't have to work hard at that". The Bishop later told me that Stidger reported to him the remark. He didn't like criticism any more than any of the rest of us but could take a good deal without flinching. He didn't like to be badgered. I think he was fearful he might lose that "control" and say something unkind or harsh.

Once he asked me if I would see a brother for him, one who had been rather persistent and nasty in his remarks. The Bishop said, "I don't want to see him again, for I can't do any more than I have told him. Just let him talk and say anything he pleases about me".

He had a fine sense of humor which often came to the front in tense moments in the cabinet and in conference sessions. One of our superintendents had the habit of bring his work sheet of appointments with every pastor marked "no change". But in about our second meeting he would begin to erase that marking. One day when we came to our meeting place, the Bishop tossed a brand new eraser over to the District Superintendent saying, "Here, Brother, you'll need this before we're through".

The last time I saw Bishop McConnell was in Charleston during the 1949 conference. We spent a delightful half-hour or more reminiscing. He inquired about many of the men who

were active in the conference during his eight years on the area and recalled many incidents in which we figured. After his book, "By the Way," was published, and I had read it, I wrote him a note of appreciation and suggested that he write one more, embodying practical points of administration of church affairs. My suggestion grew out of what I heard him say in his addresses at the Charleston conference. I really felt that such a treatment would prove helpful to ministers and laymen alike. He answered my letter in which he said, "I do not know whether I'll get around to writing any more or not. The children are not crying for it".

In the same letter, which was my last word from him, he referred to an incident which gave several of us a good laugh whenever it was mentioned. In the above mentioned trial, the accused was asked if he used the word "damned" or "darned" in calling the other man a name; his reply was, "The provocation was great, and I said something but I do not recall whether I used that word in the masculine or feminine gender."

In spite of the assertion often made that the district superintendent was nothing more than a "fifth wheel" in Methodism, I discovered many advantages and few drawbacks in the development of the Church, through that office. Besides the possibilities of helpfulness in carrying out the programs of the church and maintaining her connectional unity, the opportunity for developing fellowship and leadership in both ministry and laity are of immense value. Unless a man is so built as to feel within himself an all-sufficient quality, he will welcome the exchange of ideas, and the frank discussion of his work. Laymen usually respond favorably to the estimate of another minister honestly given of their pastor. Better operation is the net result.

I spent more time with the men on rural charges. It seemed to me at that time so many of them were in isolated spots. Radio and television were not a part of their lives and good roads were just in the beginning stage. There were a few miles of graded, sometimes paved, roads running out from county seat towns but were not connected. I didn't try to use an auto during the first three years on the district; then I learned the tricks of a Ford

runabout and made some of my trips over mud roads. Horseback and mule-back and "feet" were safer and more certain, if somewhat slower in reaching churches off the railroad. Rain, mud, cold, and snow made many an unpleasant experience in going from place to place, but the warmth of the preacher's fireside, or a layman's home, and the fellowship of the churches make the memory of those visits pleasant and refreshing.

It was interesting to note the change in appearance of country side when good roads became a reality. Calhoun County was the most inaccessible of any part of my district; there was no railroad, graded highway, nor waterway into it. Once in a while, when river stage was high enough, a small steamboat had gone up to Grantsville from Parkersburg on the Little Kanawha. My first trip into that county was to visit the church of Orma, seven miles from Arnoldsburg. From Spencer, the end of the Baltimore and Ohio branch from Ravenswood, I went horseback something over twenty miles, part of the road running in the creek bed. Farms were poorly kept, fences in bad repair, and farm buildings in need of paint. The good roads helped to change that. Owners began to take more pride in the appearance of their homes and farms when they realized more people were seeing them. My last trip over the same distance as superintendent was by car over a completely graded road and certain notable changes had taken place in the few years.

Parkersburg District at that time comprised all of Jackson County, except a few rural charges in the southern end, all of Roane, Calhoun, Ritchie, Doddridge, part of Harrison including towns of Bristol, Salem and Wallace, all of Wood, Pleasants, and Tyler, and a few charges in Wetzel including Pine Grove and Smithfield, 45 pastoral charges and 180 churches. Salaries were low and 20 charges had supply pastors. I lamented the number of supply charges and felt that they should have had better prepared men. However, as I came to know the character and quality of soul in most of these men, they captured and maintained in my mind a place of high regard. Some of them struggled against great odds, age, lack of education, low salaries which meant farming or some other form of livelihood.

But where there was earnestness, sincerity, genuine piety, and willingness to work, they were accepted and appreciated by their people. In fact, there were a few who did a better grade of work on rural and village charges than some members of conference. Several, through personal encouragement, completed courses of study or went to college and seminary and became members of the conference. Here also, in quarterly conference and in visits to the churches, I found fine ministerial timber; young men with ambition who felt the tug of God in their lives, and eventually came into the conference.

The larger churches built and dedicated during those six years were Wayside in Vienna, Friendly, Ellenboro and Salem. Several smaller rural churches were built, remodeled or completely renovated.

The most serious disturbance on the district was caused by the rising tide of Klu Klux Klanism, which seriously split one church and threatened another. In both cases injudicious interest of the pastor was much to blame.

The physical difficulties of the task, travel and other inconvenience, did not disturb half as much as the wrangling over apportionments, salaries, and change of pastors, and finally the conference session itself, with the pulling and hauling of committees and pastors, and not a little with the other brethren in the cabinet. I was often reminded of a statement made in Dr. Frank Townsend's report as superintendent one year, when after recounting the miles he had walked, ridden horseback and muleback he said that with all the stubbornness of the last named animal, he still preferred to deal with it rather than some of the brethren in his quarterly conferences.

There were times, of course, when there was enough humor in the situation to relieve the tension. One time an oil company offered to lease part of the land surrounding a certain church. Quarterly conference action was required, and a special meeting was called. When I reached the church there were enough people to start a revival, but they were in no mood for a revival. Some were fighting mad and others just "righteously indignant" but for all practical purposes I could see no difference. When

the meeting was called to order and the purpose stated, immediately one of the brethren arose and with quite an oratorical gesture and tone addressed the chair: "Brother Superintendent, How far down does the church own?" I said "Further than any one could go". Then he launched into his speech. "Will a man rob God? I say he will: If there is oil or gas under that land it belongs to Him" — and much more in the same vein. Two or more of the men had pulled the tear strings by referring to the fact that their parents were buried there. To be sure the ground to be leased did not include the cemetery lot. Permission was given the trustees to lease the ground and the conference adjourned.

I called the orator to one side after adjournment and asked why he made that speech. He said, "Why them fellers doin' the blubberin owned the land right up against the church property, and they wanted to put wells along there and suck all the Lord's oil outen fur themselves". I think he was right. They got a producer, and the last time I heard from that church it was still receiving rental. Incidentally, I have been told that it was in that same region years before, the great "wild catter", Mike Benedum, made one of his early strikes.

Visible results of one's labor in such tasks as the superintendency are slow in appearing. I plead guilty to moods of discouragement at what often seemed futile effort. At the end of three years I was ready to quit and at the conference in Wheeling 1923, asked Bishop McConnell to relieve me. He said he would if I insisted, and he could make a satisfactory adjustment with other men involved. One opening seemed quite possible, and very agreeable to me, but the move was not agreeable to the other man involved. During the session I talked several times with the Bishop and one day I told him why I felt that so much of the work was wasted energy, "lost motion". He said, "You know, I never go through a conference session without the same feeling. What does it all amount to? Then I say to myself "It is my business to do what I can and trust that the final results will be good". After a few moments of silence, I

said, "Think no more about a church for me; I'll stay the other three years if you wish."

At the same conference I was elected as one of the delegates to General Conference of 1924 which met at Springfield, Mass. Two things have always stood out in my memory of the conference: E. Stanley Jones' rejection of the bishopric and the report on unification, and its adoption by almost a unanimous vote.

I believe the action of Stanley Jones was not without a definite spiritual impact on the conference and upon the whole church. There was no doubt that the conference strongly favored him for bishop; the vote proved that and no one can honestly doubt that he was genuinely sincere in evaluating his own qualification and trying to find Christ's will for his life.

It was a moving scene when the two venerable Bishops, Cranston of the M. E. Church and Hendricks of the M. E. South, who had done so much to work out that plan of union, stood together on the platform. It is, of course, a matter of history that the union was not effected at that time: but the honest desire of many Methodists, and as I firmly believe, the will of God, could not be permanently thwarted. For my part there was nothing I more earnestly desired, and prayed for, than the union of our Methodist bodies. I could see little value in our Christian witness before the world in separate groups.

A new commission was formed, with the addition of representatives from the Methodist Protestant Church and, when the final report was brought to the General Conference of 1936 at Columbus, as a member of that body, I again had the privilege of voting for it. I was not a member of the uniting conference but sat in the first General Conference of united Methodists in Atlantic City in 1940. It goes without saying, that the second plan was better, and that the twelve years from 1924 to 1936 gave ample opportunity for study and work which produced more agreeable grounds for union. Moreover, the Methodist Protestant group, which was not included in the first plan, joined in the second, and so formed a more solid and united

front than would have resulted if the plan presented in 1924 had gone through.

For some weeks in the winter 1925-26 I had not been feeling up to par and an attack of influenza in the spring left me in bad state to finish my last year on the district. The summer dragged on, and I longed for conference to come and to be assigned to a church. I was happy to go to St. Andrews, Parkersburg. My family had attended that church for six years, I knew many of the congregation, and felt at home among them. The year started off well and gave prospects of a happy and successful pastorate. However, my health did not improve, and I was headed for the hospital. About the middle of May, I went to the Cleveland Clinic and did not return until the last of June. It was a long and grueling experience which left marks on body and soul, but was not without beneficial results to both. Enforced quiet gave ample time for meditation and prayer and, when concentration was possible, reading. My recovery seemed terribly slow and it was a constant struggle to keep down moods of depression.

One day a spiritual uplift came to me, so vivid and definite that the memory of it refreshed me often in the days of convalescence and in the years since. The first two or three weeks in the hospital my room had two other patients; both were Jews, one a young sophisticated fellow, and the other a fine pious old gentleman. One day the old man saw me reading and wanted to know *what* I was reading. I told him it was the Bible, and at that time it was the Psalms. "O Yes", he said, "the prayers of David". So I read some for him.

I was waiting for reports from the doctors, and fearing most of all that my trouble was malignancy, when one day I read Psalm 34 and verse seven stood out like a glorious sunrise. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them". I recalled the words in Deuteronomy 33:27, "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms". I claimed these promises as my own, placed myself in God's hands completely, and fear flew away, peace settled in me, and I fell asleep. I was not afraid of death, but

did worry about my family. From that on, I felt I could trust them also in His hands. St. Andrews Church holds a firm place in my affection, for had it not been for the patience and prayers of the good people of that church, my recovery would have been slower. Our family will never cease to be grateful for the unnumbered acts of kindness and the financial assistance of members of the congregation. Hubert Abels, at that time a student for the ministry, assisted me in the work of the church for about six months. He later became a member of the East Ohio Conference and rendered valuable service until his untimely death from cancer. My loyal and faithful friend, Dr. James E. Scott, who was superintendent of the district at that time, was most considerate and helpful.

It was during this period that I learned the therapeutic value of sunshine and outdoor life. We joined up with other families and camped on the Ohio River for two or three summers. Whatever hobby I have has grown out of that, and all centers on outdoor living, whether camp, picnics, fishing, flowers and vegetables or motoring. I never liked to kill, so hunting has never been on my list of sports. Once while I was a pastor in Upshur County, I went with a friend to search for squirrel. We saw one, he handed me the gun, and I blazed away. When the beautiful little animal came tumbling down, his pretty fur all bloody, limp and still quivering in dying convulsions, I said "never again". And that is the way it has been.

During the summer of 1929 while I was teaching in the Area School for Ministers at Mountain Lake Park, Mr. W. E. Stone of Wheeling, who had a home there, came to see me. He said the pastor at Thomson Church, Dr. W. E. Craig, who had been with them for nine years wanted to move: would I consider going to that church? I told him that I could have no objections, but doubted that such a move could be worked out without some injustice to Dr. Craig, and I would not be willing for that. Besides, the whole matter of appointments in the Methodist Church was with the Bishop and his cabinet and to that plan I was loyal. So that other than what I had said, "I could

have no objections" to serving Thomson. I would do nothing more about it.

I never saw Mr. Stone again nor heard from him until conference in Grafton. One day Bishop Welch said to me: "What about Thomson Church?" I told him about the conversation with Mr. Stone, and said that, while St. Andrews had invited me to return, I felt that I had been there long enough. So the appointment was made, and I moved back to Wheeling that fall, 1929.

Thomson Church had a splendid record in the City of Wheeling. The history of the church cannot be given without the history of the Stone family. Mr. E. J. Stone* of Wheeling, who joined in business with his brother-in-law Jacob Thomas, and thus started the firm still known as Stone and Thomas. Both Mr. Stone and his wife were devoutly religious people and at the outset were members of the Fourth Street Church. Mr. Stone was a local preacher and held revival services when and where the opportunity came. He held such a meeting in North Wheeling and from that and subsequent services, the North Street Church resulted. He moved his family to the Island and later held meetings and conducted a Sunday school and soon a church was underway. He attended the annual conference at Charleston, which was presided over by Bishop Edward Thomson. After the Conference he returned to Wheeling by boat, with others, including Bishop Thomson. The Bishop became ill and had to be taken from the boat at Wheeling, where he died. Because of the friendship of the Bishop with the Stone family, and his death occurring in the City, the church was given his name. The Stone family contributed largely to the first building located at 24 South Broadway, and considerably more to the present building; however, it was the second generation who did the financing for the present building. When I went to Thomson, W. E. Stone, his brother, E. L. (Lew), his sisters, Mrs. Elizabeth Talson, and Mrs. Henry F. Jones, and his niece, Mrs. Grace

**History of Thomson Methodist Church (1854-1954) by W. Frank Keefer*

Hetzel, were members. His brother, Dr. Sumner Stone, was a Methodist Minister and spent much of his time in Wheeling and worshiped with us. Lew died during my first year, and I conducted his funeral service. W. E. Stone was the most active in the affairs of the church and seldom missed a morning service. He occasionally came at night and often to prayer meeting. As is frequently the case when a man of means becomes active and interested in a church, the charge is made that it is a "one man church". However, it never seemed to me that he tried to dominate the activity or policy of Thomson. Other members of the board sought his judgment on business matters and followed his advice. He listened carefully to the arguments of others and did not always insist upon his opinions being followed. So far as the work of the church, in matters in which the pastor was the recognized leader, he never interfered. We became very good friends and when the college matter came up he told me he had hoped I would remain at Thomson the rest of his life. He didn't see the possibilities of the college and said, "Why, you'll just be a beggar for the institution: that's all, just a beggar". I said "Oh no: I'll just come around to you and show you how to make a good investment". Before he died unexpectedly, I had the satisfaction of hearing him say to me: "Well, you are doing a fine piece of work at Wesleyan, and I guess it was all right for you to go".

The economic situation in the country was growing worse in 1929-30, and it seemed certain we were headed toward a depression. No one then knew how bad it would become, but there was talk of "retrenchment", of cuts in wages, and of unemployment. We all tried to be brave and face the situation but underneath there were fears. It was much like whistling in the dark. Attendance and interest in the work of the church did not decline, and we closed our first year with a creditable record. I returned for another year, and in June, 1931, I met another sudden turn in my career. Dr. W. E. Craig went from Thomson to First Church, Clarksburg, and in the midst of a fine pastorate he suddenly died, about Easter of 1931. First Church invited Dr. Homer E. Wark, President of Wesleyan,

to become their pastor, and the arrangement was made. The Board of Trustees met during Commencement Week, accepted Dr. Wark's resignation, and elected me to the vacancy. I commuted between Wheeling and Buckhannon from June till Conference, when my pastorate at Thomson ended.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COLLEGE—Three Names but a Single School

A FRIEND ONCE REMARKED that whenever I used the term "the college", it always meant West Virginia Wesleyan, for that was the only college I knew. That is not quite the truth. I know many other colleges and recognize their standing and their value, and appreciate more than words can express their total impact upon our civilization.

It may be that I am foolishly sentimental about Wesleyan, but somehow she has really become a "Dear Mother" to me. She is more than a campus, and a group of buildings; more than library and laboratories, more than faculty and students. She is all these, plus friendship, fellowship, ideals, scholarship, loyalty and Christian character; plus the indefinable spirit which is distinctly Wesleyan.

Perhaps the feeling of *need*, which was a part of my yearning for training in those early years, and which the school at once seemed to meet, endeared her to me in the beginning, and then the lure for further development, continued to inspire affection. So, the more I did, or tried to do for the institution, the deeper became my interest.

My first knowledge of Wesleyan came through my beloved pastor mentioned earlier, Rev. Gregory Bleakley. As soon as he knew that I was thinking of the ministry, he began telling me about the West Virginia Conference Seminary at Buckhannon. He gave me a catalog and some correspondence followed. Finally this letter from President John Wier gave assurance that I could make the venture, and in November, 1901, I enrolled for my first term.

July 13, 1901
Buckhannon, W. Va.

"Dear Mr. McCuskey;

"I wish you could come in the Fall Term. But we shall welcome you in the Spring. You will find the Classical or Literary Course the best for you. In fact the Scientific is also all right. When you come, our Committee on Studies will advise you. No fear to that.

"Our education loans are usually \$25.00 a term or \$75.00 for the School Year—9 months.

"You can get the same loan every year while in school. You see this would go a good way towards your total expenses.

"I am always ready to write you. I will get you a loan when you are ready.

Cordially"
John Wier

This was the beginning of the second decade of the West Virginia Conference Seminary. Several other attempts to establish schools in the bounds of West Virginia had been made by Methodists before any divisions had occurred, and then afterward by the separate Methodist bodies. Over a period of several years there was discussion in the West Virginia Conference of the M. E. Church concerning the need and the feasibility of establishing a school of secondary or collegiate rank.

In 1890, the Seminary at Buckhannon was opened with Dr. B. W. Hutchinson as president. There is no need of a rehearsal of the events prior to the opening of the school, nor to its history since. Some historical facts are included in my inaugural address, and very much more in the "History of West

Virginia Wesleyan College", written by Dr. Thomas W. Haught for our Semi-Centennial Celebration in 1940.

I had never been away from home very long, nor very far. The thrill of that trip from Wheeling to Buckhannon over the B & O via Fairmont, Clarksburg and Weston, taking several hours counting changes and poor connections, lingers in my memory. The changing scenes along the way and the time consumed made it seem like a thousand miles or more from home. A student from Wheeling, manager of a boarding club, met me at the train and took me to a room at the home of James W. Mahood, a ministerial student doing graduate work. My room-mate was J. E. S. Lehman of Grant County.

As compared with present arrangements, the accommodations were rather meager, no bathroom, no running water, coal fire in a grate, and kerosene lamp light. Costs were low, \$1.25 per week (62½ cents for each of us), and boarding in a co-operative club ranging from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per week. There was plenty of welcome by the boys in the boarding club, and for that matter by all the students.

There was slight attempt to "break in" a lad. There were no fraternities then and the nearest approach to hazing was "jay hawking" and "snipe hunting". "Jay hawking" was performed by two fellows grabbing the victim, one on each side, and twirling him end over end. Sometimes quite a tussle ensued before the act was completed. I never resisted, so there wasn't much fun in bothering me.

The "snipe" was an imaginary bird or animal which the uninitiated knew nothing about, but which he was assured could be caught if he would go with the crowd and hold the bag. Sometimes he was rather late finding his way back to town!

During my years as a student at the Seminary and Wesleyan, had any one so much as hinted that some day I would be president of the college, I would have been the first to call him "crazy"! My thoughts were half on my studies and half on my finances. Sometimes the perplexities arising from lack of funds were more distressing than my lessons. Out of a loan of \$250.00 for my first year, a large part of which went for certain

improvements on my mother's property, when I stepped off the old street car in front of my home in south Wheeling for the summer vacation, I had left exactly *one dime*.

So it was work during the summer, borrow more money from friends, and from the Methodist Loan Fund, and work while in school. Some janitor work on the third floor of the old Seminary Building was given me. That paid handsomely, 10 cents an hour! For two years I managed a boarding club which helped me with my food bill. The boys gave the club the nick-name of "McCuskey's Beanery". That was not many miles from the truth! One day a lad came asking to board with us saying, "I'm not hard to please, just give me beans and *sich like*". We had no room. But one of the boys said the reason I refused him was because I did not know what "*sich like*" was; I only knew "beans"!

At another time I helped in the library. One summer I worked in a tin can factory in south Wheeling; another summer as assistant to the Secretary of the Wheeling Y.M.C.A. Another summer was spent in helping to organize a Sunday school, and get underway what is now Hope Church, in South Wheeling.

An incident in connection with this last task sticks with me. The group of interested people with whom I had been working during the summer gave me \$25 when I left for school. I had expected to do some preaching in a small church on the edge of Buckhannon that school year. But that did not work out. So the year was dragging along and my finances were bad and growing worse. One day worry drove me to my knees in prayer; then the uneasiness left me, and later I received a letter from one of the ladies of that Wheeling group. She said that they felt that they had given me very little for my summer's work, and that no doubt I needed some money. Enclosed was a check for \$25. This seemed to me an answer to prayer, and as a strengthener of faith, became to me another of the "all things working together for good".

There was some innocent deviltry at the Seminary with which my name was linked, and rightly; the painting of the

Prexy's barn, called "The Temple of Fee-losso-Fee"; the hanging of a skeleton on the wind-mill by the Agnes Howard Hall; and the turning of the trick on a group who thought to frighten us from the Hall by throwing tin cans at us; they wound up carrying me to my room when I feigned unconsciousness. However, I had nothing to do with putting the cow in the chapel, nor in hanging a dead dog on the electric wires, nor in stealing "Daddy Deck's" ice cream. (Maybe that was because I was not invited to take part).

The "Old Sem." stood on the same spot where the administration building now stands. It was a three story structure made of brick baked on the grounds. The old part of the Agnes Howard Hall and a frame residence for the president were the only other buildings on the campus. Well, there were certain other small buildings on the grounds, a stable for Prexy's horse, a small residence for a care-taker, a chicken house for supply of fowl for the girls' dormitory, and outside toilets. The trees were small except the oak grove. The entire campus was enclosed by a board fence. The Agnes Howard Hall was supplied with water from a well by a pump operated by a wind wheel.

In 1902 a building was constructed and called the Music Hall. It was a cheaply built unimposing three story brick structure with practice rooms for piano and voice students. It was soon dubbed by the students, "the music box" and other names not so elegant. Due to the sounds emanating from it, quite properly it could have been said that it was a "howling success". At the first meeting of the Board of Trustees following the completion of the building, I happened to be standing by a window on the second floor when two of the dignitaries passed, Dr. R. A. Reger, who was on the building committee, and Mr. J. C. Bardall of Moundsville. The latter, a man with a rather thick German accent did not like the looks of the building, and was telling Dr. Reger his opinion. The doctor said, "Why, what's the matter with it?" Mr. Bardall's reply was, "Vat's de matter mit it? Vat is it dat's not de matter mit it!"

It still stands and perhaps *should* for the service it has rendered. A few months later it proved its value when fire destroyed the main building. Classes were held in it, and what books were saved from the library were housed there until the present administration building was completed.

The fire occurred February 4, 1905. The building was heated by air with coal as fuel. Probably a faulty flue was the cause. I was standing in the first floor hall not far from the library room when some one noticed smoke coming from a ventilator and shouted "fire". An alarm was sent in to the city volunteer fire department, but it was discovered that the hose was frozen. The fire spread rapidly through the ventilators which acted as flues and in no time the fire had reached the third story. An attempt was made to salvage the equipment, chairs and other movable things were carried out or dropped from the windows. Books from the library were handed out the windows, students and faculty joined in the work.

The thoughtful and quick action of Professor Trotter saved the records and students' enrollment cards. They were the first things to be taken from the building. Of course, there was considerable confusion during the fire, or until all that could be saved was taken out and all the students were safe. Some were still on the second floor when a slight explosion occurred; there was a grand scramble to get out. John Gilmore, (the late Dr. John Gilmore of Wheeling) thought the stairs had collapsed and presented himself at one of the windows yelling for help. Some of the boys seized an overcoat and used it for a net into which he jumped to safety.

The building was a total loss. President Wier was out of town and Vice President Trotter assumed full charge. Rooms were provided in an empty residence on College Avenue; the parlors of the Agnes Howard Hall were pressed into service, as well as rooms in the Music Hall, and classes were resumed the next day.

Graduation exercises for the Seminary Class of 1905, of which I was one, and for the first College Class, consisting of five members, were held in the Opera House.

In 1904 the school was raised to collegiate grade and given the heavy name of "Wesleyan University of West Virginia" which was its official name when the first class graduated in 1905. In fact, the name was more than the modest institution could bear, so it was again changed just prior to the graduation of the next college class (1906), to its present name, "West Virginia Wesleyan College".

The next school year, 1905-06, I served my first year as a "Supply Pastor" on Cameron Circuit. I returned to college in the fall of 1906. I had graduated with advanced credits, so by carrying extra hours for the two years, and working out a course in Political Economy during the summer, was able to graduate in the 1908 class with three others, C. H. Hartley, Jerome Dailey and Florence Warden (Mrs. Harvey Harmer).

In the meantime, the new administration building was erected, President Wier had resigned, and Professor Trotter had left to become a member of the faculty of West Virginia University, and later its President. A new President of Wesleyan was installed, Dr. Carl Gregg Doney, and the first Dean, Dr. Wm. A. Haggerty, was appointed. My first meeting with Dr. Doney was in the hall of the first floor of the new building where I found him sawing boards for book shelves in the library. His name is on my college diploma. So my student days at Wesleyan covered the years 1901-1908, excluding the school year of 1905-06.

Space will not permit lengthy remarks concerning my teachers in those days, but I feel impelled to say something about a few of them. All of them deserve far more praise than these brief lines will give. One is likely to remember the impress of the character of his teachers rather than the courses taught. Dr. Frank B. Trotter was a great teacher in the knowledge of his subject and technique of instruction. He was also a great teacher in the vital marks of character as he was honest, straightforward, clean in mind and motive. His dignity and poise commanded the respect of all his students.

With the exception of first year Latin, which was taught by his sister, Miss Jessie Trotter, all my Latin courses were under

his instruction. There were frequent "asides", comments that stick like burrs in one's memory. On one occasion a student asked him a question which he could not immediately answer; he replied, "One of the hardest things for a teacher to learn is to gracefully say, "I don't know".

Dr. Trotter never lost interest in Wesleyan even after he became President of the university. He used to say that there were far more boys and girls in the state than the colleges could care for, and that Wesleyan had its place in the educational life of West Virginia. He was the first teacher hired by President Hutchinson, was on the ground when the school opened, and spent seventeen years of his life in the institution. On the day set for the opening of the Seminary, he stood with President Hutchinson looking out one of the windows facing College Ave., wondering whether any students would come for enrollment, and quoted from Virgil, "Some day it will delight us to remember these things". The first student to enroll was Roy Reger, who became an attorney and lived in Charleston. His son Roy Wirt Reger graduated while I was president.

Under date of June 27, 1931, Dr. Trotter, in his handwriting, sent me the following:

"My dear Roy:

"An attack of rheumatism and consequent operation for the removal of my tonsils have removed me from my usual activities for the last three weeks, hence the lateness of my letter of congratulations to you. Congratulations, yes, for the honor bestowed upon you in your Conference; but if it means loss of health as a consequence of hard work and worry, I can hardly express it so vigorously. The worry, if you are of the right temperament, can be laid aside, but work in that position cannot be avoided, laid on others, or shirked by one of your honest and conscientious temperament.

"In that case I can only caution you and say that everything does not have to be done in one day or one year, and every successful College President will tell you that much of his best work is done with his feet on top of the desk. Don't take your work to bed with you! Go to bed to sleep, not to

study! Anyhow I wish you the most abundant success and offer you my best help if at any time you can use it."

Very sincerely,

(Signed) Frank B. Trotter

He visited me several times and repeated in conversation what he had said in that letter. Unfortunately, I was not always able to lay aside the worries of the office when I went to bed, and more often than I like to remember, sleep did not come.

Thomas W. Haught! One cannot think of Wesleyan without thinking of the man who has been a part of the institution, as student, or teacher and dean, and Professor Emeritus, from 1891 to the time of this writing. My first term in the Seminary found me in his class in Reed and Kellog, Grammar. Exacting in his requirements, strict in discipline, and at times caustic in his remarks, all his students profited by his faithful and thorough work. He has been as sturdy as the oaks of the grove, and has adorned the tradition of the institution as they have the campus. His wife, Helen Wetmore, was "Preceptress" at Agnes Howard Hall, and teacher of Art, when I arrived in town. For half a century they have lived in Buckhannon, worked in the college and in the community, reared their family of three boys and one girl, and have made a rich contribution to society.

Dr. Haught was still a member of the faculty when I went back in 1931. He could well have regarded me as an upstart, and a pretty green piece of timber for the head of the college, and maybe down deep he did have some misgivings, which, if he had, he was generous enough to hide. He was most helpful whenever I sought his advice, and I am glad to confess that I leaned on him considerably.

Another of my first teachers was kindly, J. J. (Daddy) Deck. Dr. Deck was a gifted and scholarly man. He had been trained in Europe for the Roman Catholic priesthood, came to America for further training and served the church for a while. His life was an interesting story of inner struggle for peace of mind and conscience which the theology, the philosophy and the practices of the Roman Church did not give him. He finally

withdrew from the Roman Church and gave himself to teaching, first in Taylor University and then in Wesleyan.

I began Greek with him. He was at home in the classics, in his native tongue, German, and in French and English. One year he taught a class in Hebrew for the accommodation of a few budding theologists. Once in a pinch, he taught a year of chemistry. He knew music and gave his daughter Ida a start in piano which led her to the concert stage. He was fond of his students and with Mrs. Deck gave many a student a warm welcome in their home. He was still a member of the faculty when I returned in 1931, but had to retire on account of poor health, and soon after passed to his reward.

Leta Snodgrass was a student when I entered the Seminary, and later came to the college in 1913 as a teacher of Art, which position she ably filled until her retirement in 1949. She served during my term of office. I have had no more loyal friends through the years than the Snodgrass family.

One of the lasting friendships formed in those first years was with O. E. Karickhoff. I visited him in his home on Pecks Run and he spent some days with me in Wheeling. We attended Y.M.C.A. conventions together, and were delegates to Student Y.M.C.A. Conference at Lakeside in 1904. He was teaching sociology and economics at Wesleyan when I returned in 1931, and continued until his unexpected death on Jan. 25, 1946. "Kary" was a quiet, unassuming man, whose devotion to Wesleyan was sincere and deep. Shortly after taking office, he said to me, "Now Mac, don't allow our friendship to interfere with the best interests of Wesleyan; if you ever feel that my usefulness to the college is passed, tell me so".

THE PRESIDENCY

Let us go back to the election of a president in 1931, and some events leading up to it. As far back as 1922 when President Fleming resigned, there was considerable talk in the conference that a West Virginia man should be selected. There was not then, nor at any time, any organized effort to force

into office a local man. Dr. E. Guy Cutshall was the board's selection. When after two years he resigned, the feeling for a conference man was more pronounced, and a little more welcome to the board. Some of the members of the board of trustees had talked to me about the matter, but I did not give them much encouragement, because in fact, the responsibility frightened me, and I was not sure that the presidency of the college was in the range of what I felt was *my call to the ministry*.

When the board met to elect a successor to Dr. Cutshall, I was surprised at the vote. After several ballots in which neither Dr. Mecklenburg nor myself could command the necessary three fourths to elect, I offered to withdraw in favor of him, but those most strongly supporting me, asked me not to do that. It was not so much a matter of personalities as of policy. Dr. Mecklenburg had been very successful as a promoter, raising funds for institutions, and there were a number of the members of the board who did not believe that an administration dedicated to a fund raising campaign at that particular time would be to the best interests of the college. Finally, the committee on nomination was asked to retire and consider the whole situation and bring in a definite recommendation. The name of Homer E. Wark was submitted, and he was elected.

Dr. Wark never lost his interest in the pastorate, and really wanted to return to that work. Towards the end of his fifth year there was a vacancy in First Church, Clarksburg, and his call to that pulpit gave him the opportunity he craved. One day before the meeting of the board, we chanced to be together, and he said, "Roy, you should be the next president of Wesleyan". He may have said as much to others; I do not know. However, there was little time for much to be said by anyone. Nevertheless, I discovered that there had been a good deal of discussion, pro and con, as to my "fitness" for the position. Since I was a member of the board, and "my manner of life" from childhood was pretty well known throughout the conference, my friends were quite frank with me. I well knew some of the objections: was too well known; lacked dignity, would always be known as "Mac";

had had no business or executive experience except as pastor and district superintendent; had had no training or experience in educational field; and perhaps most damning of all, I did not have a Ph.D. degree. My wife was brought into the picture because she was not a college graduate. (She had attended Wooster College, Ohio, and had taught in the Wheeling public schools before our marriage).

When the Board met June 1, 1931, the committee called me into consultation and asked if I would assume the responsibility. We discussed the matter quite frankly; certain objections to me as stated above, some of which I was obliged to admit; the economic slump which was growing into the "depression", and our heavy indebtedness; again I raised the question recurring in my mind, "Would I be running away from the ministry"? It was Bishop Welch who settled that—at least for the time—by saying, "You are going into a larger ministry than you have ever had; you are not even going out of the pastorate, for you will be the pastor of hundreds of young people".

I felt that since the committee knew so well my liabilities and assets (if any), and since they were still willing to trust me with the task, I would pledge my best of body, mind and soul. The committee recommended and the election quickly followed. It was not long before the administrative duties, due to the depression, became so heavy and vexing, that the good Bishop's prediction concerning a great pastorate with young people began to fade! While I shall always cherish as among my most rewarding experiences at the college, the delightful association with the students, such contacts were all too meager and unsatisfactory because time and opportunity were lacking.

I am appending here a memorandum made at the time, and an excerpt from a letter written by Mr. John Raine, President of the Board of Trustees to Mr. W. E. Stone, of Thomson Church:

May 18, newspapers carried the announcement that Dr. Wark had been appointed to Clarksburg First Church. It was also said that I would probably be his successor. Certain members of the board informed me that such rumors were well

founded. I gave the matter much prayerful consideration. Thomson was proving a very happy pastorate. I was loathe to leave. Many problems were confronting the college, the most vexing were finances. Depression was severe. We had faced deficits for the past few years. We talked it over in the family. I had some uneasiness about my health on account of my illness in 1927. Could I endure the strain involved in the task? Finally we tried to "balance" the considerations for and against, and came to the conclusion that if the position were offered without any effort on my part, I should accept.

Mr. Raine appointed a special committee to study the questions of Dr. Wark's successor and bring in some recommendation to the board which was called to meet Monday, June 1, at Buckhannon. Anticipating that the committee would want to talk the matter over with me, I wrote out the following points which I felt should be considered by all of us: qualifications, objections, attitudes of conference, laymen, alumni, faculty and students, demands upon energy of body and mind, financial situation, obligation to Thomson Church and my own conscience concerning the "call" to the ministry.

After an hour and a half of discussion with the committee, I consented to the submission of my name to the board for President. The committee, Hon. Harvey W. Harmer, Chairman, Dr. C. E. Goodwin, Dr. Denver C. Pickens, Hon. W. T. Williamson and Hon. Clyde O. Law reported to the Board at 5:30. The minutes record the following:

"On motion of Colonel W. T. Williamson, seconded by Judge H. Roy Waugh, the Board went into executive session to hear the report of the Committee on Supply of President. Senator Harvey W. Harmer, Chairman of the Committee of Supply of President, then made the report of the committee in which Dr. Roy McCuskey was named as their unanimous choice for president of Wesleyan College. Judge Samuel V. Woods then moved that the report of the Committee on Supply of President be adopted by a rising vote. The motion was seconded, by Dr. H. D. Clark but then was declared out of order in view of the provision in the by laws that the president must be elected by ballot. The president then ap-

pointed Rev. M. C. Miles and Mr. Myron B. Hymes tellers for the election. The ballots having been collected and counted President Raine announced that thirty-one votes had been cast and that the result thereof was unanimous for the election of Dr. Roy McCuskey as president. President Raine then appointed Dr. Homer E. Wark and Dr. Denver C. Pickens to notify Dr. Roy McCuskey of his election and to bring him before the Board. On the appearance of Dr. McCuskey, President Raine addressed him notifying him of his unanimous election and wishing him success in his new office. Dr. McCuskey, in a brief acceptance speech, expressed his appreciation and pledged his best efforts in behalf of the College".
(*Excerpt From Mr. Raine's Letter*)

"I am conscious of the fine relations that exist between yourself and Dr. McCuskey as your pastor and friend. No man can be with him and know his heart and mind and not love Dr. McCuskey. I know too he had a very high esteem for you. It is a delicate and serious thing to break up such a relationship without good reason and really without notice. So some explanations and apologies are due you.

"When the vacancy at Wesleyan became a real possibility,

"The ministry within the state demanded Dr. McCuskey.

"The laity asked for him.

"The faculty of the college looked to him.

"The student body signified they would welcome him.

"The supply committee were convinced he was the man and, finally, the board itself unanimously elected him.

That is some compliment to the worth of the man and backed by such unanimous support he will 'make good'.

"Thompson church will lose a fine pastor but will contribute to the youth of the state and neighboring states a fine tempered Christian gentleman and scholar who will be in the front of the firing line for Christian culture and education.

"Because Dr. McCuskey believes in a called and trained body for the Christian ministry, I believe he will be most instrumental in drawing young men and women of "parts" to our college and direct them into the paths leading to service both at home and abroad in the 'kingdom of our Lord and His Christ,' "

Mr. Raine's presentation to the board was most hearty. I was deeply moved and could respond with difficulty. I did manage to express my appreciation, and pledge my whole-hearted service. After adjournment I was warmly congratulated by individual members of the Board. The following members were present and voted: Bishop Herbert Welch, John A. Barnes, W. T. Williamson, Rev. C. Fred Anderson, Rev. J. W. Engle, H. W. Harmer, C. D. Howard, Ronald Moist, Rev. J. E. Scott, Rev. L. S. Grose, Dr. O. L. Hudkins, H. Roy Waugh, Lawrence Lynch, Myron B. Hymes, John Raine, Olandus West, Rev. J. B. Workman, Rev. M. C. Miles, Rev. Denver C. Pickens, W. H. Newcomb, U. G. Young, Samuel T. Spears, Rev. S. B. Hart, Miss Mary Scott, Rev. H. D. Clark, Rev. C. E. Goodwin, Dr. L. G. Beerbower, Clyde O. Law, W. B. Mathews, Samuel V. Woods, Mrs. Ellis A. Yost, Rev. John E. Hanifan.

Rev. M. C. Miles who acted as teller, gave me as a souvenir of the occasion, the ballots.

We went to the alumni banquet at Agnes Howard Hall. The news of the election had spread. A sound of applause greeted my entrance. Goodwin was toastmaster and introduced the new president. My response was brief but as hearty as I could make it.

Commencement exercises were conducted on Tuesday morning. Cap, gown and hood were borrowed, and I joined the procession. After the conferring of degrees, Harvey W. Harmer, vice president of the board, in a very happy introduction, presented me to the audience. Little time had been given for preparation of any response so my acknowledgement had to be brief. It was about as follows:

"Mr. President, fellow members of the board of trustees, faculty, students, alumni, and friends of West Virginia Wesleyan College:

"One would be utterly void of all sense of appreciation did he not feel more deeply than words can express the very peculiar honor of such an occasion.

"The minutes of the Board of Trustees of the West Virginia Conference Seminary carries the item that June 2, 1890,

Dr. B. W. Hutchinson was elected president. That was the beginning of the administrative life of the institution. Today closes the 40th year of instruction. During this span of two score years, seven men have guided the affairs of the college through the several stages of its development. They have left the imprint of their characters upon the institution. I trust I may be a worthy successor of these men who have paved the way for Wesleyan's present success.

"In November, 1901, I enrolled as a student here and from that time to this my life has been shaped by the institution.

"The work which lies before us will be heavy. The task is more than I can hope to accomplish without the fullest cooperation of all concerned. In my own strength, I am wholly inadequate to meet the challenge, but with an unfaltering trust in God who called me into the ministry of his Son, I pledge to you my best endeavors.

"I have been thinking ever since the conference with the committee yesterday afternoon when a decision had to be made, and was finally made, of those lines of Maltbie Babcock's hymn—

" 'Be strong!

" 'We are not here to play, to dream, to drift,
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.
Shun not the struggle, face it, 'tis God's gift.
Be strong, be strong!' "

"May I ask your prayers that I may be strong for this undertaking."

The date for the inauguration of the new president was fixed for Homecoming November 21, 1931. (The board of trustees was called to meet November 20, at which time I submitted my first official report).

The subject of my address for the inauguration was "Christian Education, A Problem In Stewardship". I had two definite reasons for selecting that subject, my deep conviction that Christian Education is necessary in our civilization, and that it is the Christian church's responsibility; second, that stewardship, the acknowledgement that all we are and all we have, life with all its possibilities and accomplishments—are gifts from God, that

all this is basic to meeting our responsibilities. I felt that the crisis which the depression was forcing us to face, could be successfully passed only as we recognized our stewardship obligations and renewed our sacrifices in order to meet them.

"Stewardship is the recognition that all human values, spiritual and material, have their origin in God, who is the author, creator, and ultimate owner of all life; also, that we are answerable to Him for our trusteeship of all gifts.

"This, therefore, is the thesis of our discussion, the relation of the principles of Christian Education and Stewardship. How shall we answer, both to our fellowmen and to God, for the educational privileges, opportunities and responsibilities, inherent in our experiences as children of God, as citizens of His Kingdom, as brethren in Christian fellowship?"

These ideas were developed not only in the inaugural address, but in sermons and addresses from time to time, both at the college and in churches.

During the summer of 1931 after my election, with the help of a student solicitation committee, which had been set up, I gave extra time and effort to increase enrollment the next semester. The record shows an increase of only eighteen regular students, and seventeen special and extension students. The depression was gaining momentum, and was affecting every phase of college interest. Fewer students could finance themselves; every source of income was cut, endowment and contributions as well as student fees. Banks were closed, including the two in Buckhannon, which tied up \$6,000 of our funds. One bank had permitted us to deposit \$2,000 just two days before the closure. It was never clear in my mind whether or not the cashier knew what was coming when he permitted the deposit. As evidence of the strain under which nearly every one was working, and the fear and uneasiness which gripped business, I recall this incident:

Some months later when this same bank reopened, and the college was in need of money to meet utilities' accounts during the summer, I asked for a sixty-day loan until the fall enroll-

ment would bring in some cash. The loan was denied. I spoke to some of the directors reminding them of our plight and of the many years we had done business with that bank. A day or two later the cashier called me saying that the loan would be granted. However, in the meantime we had negotiated the small loan from a bank outside the city, and that eased the tension on all concerned.

Another humiliating experience was being "kicked out" of the North Central Association. The college had been advised the year before that certain changes would have to be made, particularly with relation to our athletics. We were honestly working toward these suggested changes, and I met with the board of review in Chicago in the spring of 1932, and begged them to allow us a longer stay in order to complete those changes. Our financial situation did not help us, and pleading was to no avail; we were dropped.

Lest some may think that the preceding administrations, as well as mine, were in serious fault because we were dropped from the North Central, I offer the following explanation and observations:

Sometime in the last half of the nineteen-twenties much was being said and written in criticism of athletic expenditures in colleges and universities across the country. A large part of the criticism related to scholarships and other forms of support for those participating in intercollegiate athletics, especially football. West Virginia Wesleyan had maintained for some years a good athletic program and had given some financial help to athletes, but not indiscriminately. A respectable academic standing was required. Sometime, just prior to my administration, a loan fund for athletes was set up. The money came in from alumni. Loans in various amounts according to individual needs were made to the boys. Some of these loans were repaid and some were not. Some of the recipients may not have regarded the loans as bona fide and so thought it was not necessary to repay them.

The board of review apparently doubted our integrity, objected to the loan arrangement, and asked the college to

discontinue all loans. If all loans or financial help had been withdrawn at once, an injustice would have been done to those already enrolled. They would have been seriously hampered in their honest effort to complete their courses and graduate. This is what I tried to explain to the board of review when I met with them.

The irony involved in the whole question with the North Central Association was that the little amount we and other small colleges were putting into athletics was a mere "drop in the bucket" compared with the huge amounts expended for the same purpose by larger colleges and universities which were members of the North Central.

Shortly after 1932, the unfairness of the stringent attitude of the standardizing agencies was called into question by some of the larger institutions. I remember in particular a published article by a representative of the University of Buffalo.

My opinion at that time—and it has not changed—was that Wesleyan would have been dropped had we complied fully with the requirement concerning athletics. Our financial condition was precarious and other requirements of the association hinged upon finances. Our endowment was meager and our faculty salaries were too low.

Moreover, we would have lost the respect of good students and their friends had we forced them out after having promised to help them through their four years. Many of the boys of that period have made good in their careers, and have reflected honor upon Wesleyan. I mention only a few: Clifford "Gip" Battles, David Reemsnyder, Forrest, Arthur, and Howard Bachtel, Leonard "Feets" Barnum, Orville L. Edmundson, Clyde E. Barker, Edward I. Howell, and Sam Mazzie.

It is well to record a fact or two which does not appear in any of my reports, and perhaps not in any of the minutes of the board. The addition to Agnes Howard Hall was authorized by the board before the depression set in. One of the more loyal supporters of the college was Mr. C. D. Howard of Cowen, in memory of whose daughter the hall was named. He pledged a cash gift towards the building, and it was his intention even-

tually to retire the building bonds. The lumber business, which was his line, was terrible hard hit and he lost so heavily that he was never able to do what he had planned. Banks had loaned us money and endowment securities had been given as collateral. Some securities were no good, and the banks were calling for more collateral or payment of loans. All this was climaxing in that first year, so that when the board that year, came together for the meeting the last of May, which made the fourth meeting of the board that year, we faced a very discouraging outlook. Our total indebtedness was over \$210,000.00 of which \$91,000.00 was the building bonds.

My own feelings are reflected in this paragraph of my report to the board May 21, 1932:

"We are in a predicament which will require more than the president and the business manager to work out. If that statement is an admission on the part of the administration that he cannot handle the situation, it will have to stand. My interest in this institution is too deep-seated to permit personal pride, or personal gain, to stand in the way of her advancement. Moreover, such weight of responsibility over many months could easily break the strongest man. The committee who talked with me a year ago about assuming the office of president, will recall that I hesitated because of these harassing debts. You all know that conditions are worse than a year ago. I have run down every clue for money I heard about, and have collected in dribs from churches and alumni. I am willing to relinquish the office tomorrow and let you find another man, or group of men, who can bring the college out of the distress she is in".

Then followed three suggestions, including a further cut in salaries in order that we might balance the budget, and closed the report with the following:

"Fellow members of the board, I have not lost faith in West Virginia Wesleyan College, nor you, nor God: but I frankly admit I cannot see the way through the present darkness. We will need unusual patience and Divine guidance in this hour".

The board had authorized the floating of a bond issue of \$100,000. These were printed and ready for sale at our meeting

May 31, 1932. No bank would take any of them except as additional collateral for some of our loans. That helped, but we still needed cash to meet some pressing loans as well as current expenses. The college was in debt to the faculty, who had already returned to the treasury five percent of their salaries that school year. Further deep cuts in salaries went from the president down to the janitor, a total of 45%. Finally, we put on a campaign for sale of our bonds to individuals throughout the state, by which we secured enough cash to keep us going.

Meanwhile, we launched a vigorous campaign for new students, gave small scholarships, and used the "workships" which were provided by the government's National Youth Administration. Expenses were reduced to the minimum; student help was used in our offices and for janitor and other services where we could use it. There was some "doubling" of work by members of the faculty to save additional personnel. When I assumed office, the college had a business manager; that officer left and his work was taken over in part by myself and in part by the treasurer. So, we "inched" along, and finally weathered the storm.

In retrospect, many of the inconveniences and actual hardships which caused worry for members of the faculty, students and their parents have been forgotten. Nevertheless they were very real at the time. We all had to make retrenchments in our household and living expense and forgo some things we had planned.

One store which had furnished food for the Agnes Howard Hall and submitted monthly statements notified the college that we must go on a "cash" basis. The same notice was given to members of the faculty. As individuals we complied. However, after some argument, the store rescinded its action concerning the dormitory. One member of the faculty had undertaken the purchase of a much needed refrigerator and was about to cancel the order. We worked out a plan by which he could proceed. Some members of the faculty were working towards higher degrees, or were thinking of leave of absence for that purpose. Some plans had to be altered. While no one suffered for the

necessities of life, there was little chance for luxuries in home furnishings, clothing, or food.

Students and their parents were confronted with uncertainties both as to entering school and in continuing from one semester to another. A widow whose daughter had won a scholarship for her first year, was struggling along earning all she had time to work for in order to graduate. Repeatedly her mother would appeal for extra help by loan or gifts; semester after semester it was the same thing, both mother and daughter stinting themselves until she had completed the four years.

I recall a boy whose father was a farmer and had squeezed out about his last dollar to help the boy. The student had worked all the hours he could to help himself, and still needed considerable before he could graduate. I sponsored a loan for him. Shortly after he graduated he enlisted in the army, and in a few months he had saved enough to send me in one check the total loan.

There was a fine spirit of sharing all around. One present member of the faculty is grateful to a woman from Wheeling who gave him financial help. A man from the same city sent me \$500 a year for several years to use for students who were short in finances, and asked no accounting nor names of students. Gifts and loans for students came from other individuals and organizations. We used the third floor of our home, 68 College Ave., for boys who needed help and were willing to do some work about the house and lawn. One boy with his widowed mother stayed with us for a year. He is now principal of a high school in Ohio. Students shared with each other.

There was one boy who had a particularly hard time. It has been said of some men, that they went through college "on a shoe string." I believe this boy did not have the "shoe string!" But, when I once saw him in Washington, D.C., working in a hotel to earn his way through one of the universities in that city, he slipped into my hand twenty dollars with the remark, "Give this to some student who is having a tough time to get through." That same person is now in the diplomatic service of our government.

These brief items do not present the whole picture, but I believe they do point up our difficulties during most of the ten years, thirty-one to forty-one.

I can never give too high praise to the faculty for their loyalty, devotion and sacrifice during those years. There was little complaint, and with one or two exceptions, no nagging at the administration about low salaries. We were all "in the same boat," and all accepted the situation and tried to make the best of it. My own attitude was this: discover what could be done constructively and waste no time nor energy in fussing about conditions which we could not mend. More attention was given to extension courses, and in the summer of 1932, we conducted a session at Logan. There was a demand for strictly business courses, so we organized that department. We observed "Arbor Day", and sought to beautify the campus, by securing gifts of shrubbery and trees.

Mr. C. Lawrence Kingsbury, (now dean of the department of music, Marshall University), came in as director of band, and suggested a summer music camp for students on the high school level. This was carried on for three summers. It brought to our campus quite a number of boys and girls as students and some very excellent teachers. The Summer School for Ministers of the Pittsburgh Area, was transferred from Mt. Lake Park, Maryland, to Wesleyan, and later the Christian Workers School, and summer assemblies for youth, were held on the campus. All these gave splendid publicity to the college, which in turn helped the enrollment.

All encouragement possible was given to the faculty to make their teaching effective, not only in their courses, but in their influence and personal contacts by aiding development in Christian character. In one of our first faculty meetings I made this statement:

"Let us not be side-tracked. Our *main line* is helping the student interpret life, particularly his own life. What is he to get and hold which will be a part of his philosophy of life? How are we using our courses and our fellowship to furnish a spiritual background for his career? I think that we

would do well to keep some distance from the utilitarian idea in our teaching, that is, to make the courses we offer to our students of more value than a certain intellectual preparation for a livelihood. We all remember teachers whom we have had, men and women whom we hold in high regard, because of what they were, rather than what they taught”.

I sought advice from different members of the faculty, and kept them informed concerning the general conditions of the institution. Dean O. D. Lambert and Mr. A. L. Aylesworth, treasurer, were especially cooperative, and gave long hours not only to duties in their respective offices, but to advising and helping in problems which were my responsibility. We were not annoyed too much by adverse criticism from the alumni, parents of students, nor the pastors of the conference. I think this was largely due to the confidence throughout the state in the character and ability of the faculty. No doubt more was thought and said than ever reached my ears, thanks to charitable consideration of my short comings! I am quite sure that in the area where the alumni of most colleges bring their hottest attacks, the athletics of the institution, there was scarcely any commotion due to the very high regard in which the late Coach C. B. “Cebe” Ross was held throughout the state.

Something should be said also in praise of the board of trustees. What a faithful devoted group they were! Wherever and whenever I met them, either as individuals, or in groups as committees, or in regular sessions, there was courtesy and consideration, and attention to our problems. I always felt that I had their respect and confidence. And I reciprocated in kind. Nothing was kept back, either of success or of failure, in trying to carry through the policies and plans adopted by the board. They attended the many sessions which were called, bore their own expense in travel, and contributed as each felt able toward the funds of the college. No one of the board ever denied me his time when I asked it.

I missed the wise guidance of Judge C. W. Lynch and Judge Samuel V. Woods, both of whom had served as President of the Board, but discovered a choice spirit in the leadership of

John Raine, who was president when I went into office. I maintained close contact and friendship with both Judge Lynch and Judge Woods during their remaining days. The wholesome Christian experience of John Raine, coupled with his generosity, made him a character never to be forgotten. He had given heavily to the college and had planned to give more, but the depression caused heavy losses to his business. If he was "broke" financially he never broke in spirit.

When near Rainelle I always went to see him. One hot day in summer I found him at his desk, his sleeves rolled up and showing every indication of hard work. Before I scarcely had time to say a word other than the usual greeting, with his always ready smile, he said; "At my age, I cannot get back to where I was financially, but I can still work and perhaps get a small business going. I have no regrets for giving largely to the college; in fact, all that I have left out of my fortune, is what I gave to Wesleyan; that is not lost. If some other Methodists in the state had done what I wanted them to do, they would not have *lost everything*, and Wesleyan would be better off".

While speaking of the effects of the depression on Mr. Raine, it is well to call to mind what a sifting process that period was. Others besides Mr. Raine faced financial collapse, but refused to be overcome by their reverses. Mr. Howard, already mentioned, felt the pressure tremendously. One day he came to me saying that he did not have the money to pay his daughter's tuition for the next semester, which would be her last. It seemed to me that in view of all he had already given the school he was entitled to that small consideration, and I so told him. However, before the school year ended he sent the money. My soul ached for him that day, for he seemed so hurt and embarrassed in having to mention the matter. And there were still others who could not do what they wanted to do for the college and for that very reason wanted to resign their places on the board.

Mr. Raine retired from the presidency of the board in 1933, and Clyde O. Law was elected. I cannot do justice to Clyde Law, for I would be charged with over statement and

prejudice through friendship. We first met on Wesleyan's campus in 1901; became close friends, graduated in the Seminary Class of 1905, and have been joined in heart and soul for Wesleyan's interest ever since. He has given far more time and money to the college than I have, and for a quarter century and more, has had much to do towards shaping her policies. When the first hundred years of West Virginia Wesleyan's history is written, the major part of whatever success she shall have attained in that period will be credited to Clyde O. Law. No one has ever matched him in length of years and hard work for his Alma Mater.

Because Wesleyan is a church college, we have always enjoyed the interest and support of the Methodists of the conference, and the boards and organizations of the denomination. I received much help and encouragement from the secretaries of different boards, and members of the University Senate. Bishop Welch left the area in 1932, and Bishop Leonard came to the Pittsburgh area. No one could have been more concerned about our problems than he. His sympathetic attitudes towards our welfare did much to build morale, and his wise counsel was of great help. Eight of my ten years as president he was a friend and brother in the college councils. Bishop Straughn came in 1940 with eagerness to help us, and my experience with him during my last year was equally happy.

The positive and constructive attitude which we followed in the academic work of the college, we tried to carry through in the other phases of administration. It never seemed to me that we should assume that the depression would "last forever"; rather it should be treated as a condition which would pass away, and that we should be ready for advances when that time came.

"Our return to normal condition will be no more rapid than the general return to normal conditions throughout the nation. By definite and persistent effort we can stimulate our own recovery, and so establish our institution that with the advance of business we shall be quite ready for a period of splendid development". (Report June 5, 1934).

This could be done by laying the groundwork for improvements, new buildings, searching for friends who either had money, or knew others who had the means of helping when the time came; most of all by so taking into our confidence the people of the state and Methodist friends outside the state, as to create a wide and deep area of good will.

My faith in the college was fixed, and I repeatedly expressed my conviction, as in this paragraph in the report of June 6, 1933:

"We have had to fight this year another thing, a sort of persistent rumor which I am told has emanated even from those connected with the college, that it will be impossible to continue the institution. No one knows the difficulties of the situation any better than I do. I have had to live with them for two years, and I will admit that I cannot see clear through the cloud, but I have been careful not to express that in public. *I still believe that in the providence of God this institution will remain. I believe that it ought to remain. I believe that it has a place in the educational plan of the state of West Virginia. Furthermore, it is my deep conviction that if the Methodists of the state of West Virginia will not sacrifice at this time sufficiently to keep in existence our churches and our church institution, they will not deserve the name of Methodist nor a place in the Kingdom's program*".

The board requested me to prepare a report of our situation and present it to the annual conference in September, 1933, in which these convictions were restated.

My reports to the board were sometimes rather lengthy, and at the time may have seemed wearisome. My reason for going into detail was to keep the board informed and to keep their minds off the discouraging aspects of our situation. It always seemed to me that if we had a goal, and a definite program of activity, we could go further than if we had nothing at all. Consequently, in the report to the board June 5, 1934, the following list of objectives were set forth, with this comment:

"Ladies and gentlemen of the Board of Trustees, I realize that this is a full sized program. We may not reach every objective. I am certain that we shall go further by reaching out

toward these objectives and setting ourselves with determination to meet as many as possible, then we can possibly go if we have no program at all”.

This comment was then followed with suggestions of what seemed to me the most important things to be done. First of all, in view of our situation with the North Central Association, was the raising of the standard of the college to meet the association's requirements. How soon this could be done would depend upon certain changes which the North Central had made in requirements for admission, and our ability to meet those requirements. So many factors entered into the program that I did not wish to jump quickly into the effort, and then suffer another retreat; we would do better to move slowly and be certain of our position.

Certainly we faced severe competition in securing students because we were not fully accredited. However, at that time our enrollment was showing a lower percentage of decrease than many fully accredited institutions. To put the college on the way at this point, I proposed that there be appointed a joint committee of three members of the board of trustees and three members of the faculty to “carefully study the requirements of the North Central and the necessary steps on the part of college to meet them.”

Another “must” was the maintenance and improvement of physical properties. Of course we suffered here because of the lack of funds. We had only three regular men on our maintenance force. How could they care for all the repairs, especially, as often happened several things needed attention at the same time? The committee on buildings and grounds was constantly pointing to the need for repairs and improvement.

This brought us again to our painful financial status. But I believed that something could be done, however slight, in several ways. We should endeavor to rebuild our endowment to its original amount and push toward a half-million more. We should work toward increased support from our constituency, churches in the conference and alumni. If we could have

earnest cooperation from all friends of Wesleyan, we could secure more annuities, scholarships, bequests and special gifts.

More students would bring us more income, so I asked that we work toward a full-time student body of 550 to 600. It seemed to me we had by no means done all that could be done in student solicitation within our state through high school visitation, contacts with church groups, ministerial and lay cooperation, and alumni, especially those in the teaching field. We already had a goodly number of students from other states, and it was my belief that plans should be made to "step up" student solicitation outside West Virginia.

From the beginning of our school it has been a "church related" institution and West Virginia Conference connected. I wanted Wesleyan to remain that way and to set ourselves to the development of a more distinctively religious atmosphere. Our position as a Christian college demanded a persistent effort in this development. In this connection, there was a statement in an address by Bishop Frederick D. Leete, "Philosophy of Christian Education," which stuck in my mind. Even as I write this now, it returns with force:

"A Christian college is a contradiction in terms and an imposter if it fails to give to its students together with its various courses, a unified and consistent picture of spiritual truth. In a church college the best scholarship and the highest idealism should be conjoined and neither of these rules should be sacrificed to the other."

To reach this objective, no radical changes would be required in administration or general activities of faculty and students. It was my feeling that we needed the earnest cooperation of trustees, faculty and students in *emphasizing* the religious interest of college community. We should maintain a faculty genuinely sympathetic with Christian ideals and actively engaged in church work. We should foster religious services for the benefit of all students and so conduct them as to make definite impressions for good. Most certainly, all college activities, both by students and by faculty, should be carried through with refinement and high moral tone.

There was one last item which I put in the list of objectives, plans for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the college. I thought the period to be covered in the celebration should be the two school years 1938-1940, and that it should be a development program covering at least four things: payment of all indebtedness, additional endowment of \$500,000, all buildings put in good repair, and one new and much needed building, a library. In preparation for this celebration, it would be well to appoint a semi-centennial committee large enough to include representation of trustees, faculty, alumni, ministers and laymen of the Conference.

A semi-centennial committee was set up, and we were definitely moving ahead. Certainly we needed money and plenty of it, but the time was not propitious for a campaign. The celebration of our fifty years of service furnished the opportunity for fund raising. Our strategy was to deny ourselves many things but sustain the hope that needed funds would come later as a part of that celebration.

We added two new standing committees, the policy committee and committee on wills and estates. Both committees began to function and proved quite helpful as the months rolled along. We did not expect great immediate results, but felt certain that as part of a long range program good results would be seen; those expectations have been realized.

Another action which gave much encouragement to the faculty was the establishment of a pension and retirement plan. No such plan had been in operation and the future of teachers was anything but bright. Because of ill health, Dr. Deck retired after 30 years of service, without a penny of pension from the college. Other teachers had been with us a long time and were approaching retirement age. Different plans were studied, and finally the board adopted the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association, and the faculty accepted it gladly.

Any privately supported institution must receive sometime large bequests in order to keep functioning and as an encouragement to smaller contributors. Wesleyan had not been blessed with many such gifts. There were those who feared that we could

never survive and that what they could give would eventually be lost. As a matter of fact, *no money is ever lost that has been invested in schools; only materials—buildings and equipment—may fall into disuse; the purpose for which they were furnished has been fulfilled in the development of the mind and character of the students who in turn go on benefitting mankind.*

During President Fleming's administration an agreement was reached with the General Board of Education (Rockefeller) by which that board was to contribute \$125,000 on condition that the college raise \$375,000 for what was known as the Victory Fund of \$500,000. Through the generous extension of time due to slow collection of subscriptions, the most of the \$125,000 was finally secured. *This was the first large financial contribution to Wesleyan by any person or foundation.* Since the school's founding in 1890, little had ever been contributed by persons outside West Virginia.

In the year 1931-1932, we were invited to participate in an organization called the Associated Colleges. The purpose of this organization was to interest educational and philanthropic foundations, business concerns and individuals of wealth, in the support of privately controlled colleges. Some 25 or 30 institutions covering practically all sections of our country were included in the group. I attended a meeting of the representatives of the group in New York. It was decided to undertake a campaign for an emergency fund of \$250,000 to be completed by August of 1932, from which Wesleyan would have received between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The venture proved unsuccessful and the whole movement collapsed.

We tried to revive interest in the General Board of Education. We contacted other foundations and individuals, but were unsuccessful so far as immediate results were concerned. However, beginnings were made, and the background of some of our larger gifts in recent years is quite interesting. The story of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin A. West's gift reflects the spiritual character and Christian devotion of these sturdy Methodists.

Soon after my election someone said to me that a man who once lived in West Virginia, had made a fortune in leather,

either in sale, or manufacture of shoes. That was all this person knew about the man. He thought he was still living. Well, that was not much to start with. I kept inquiring here and there but could never strike the right person who knew the man's name. One day shortly after Dr. Fleming came to head up our semi-centennial campaign, he came into my office to go over names, and suggestions of plans for his work. We spent most of the morning together, and he stepped across the hall to his office. It was then that one of those incidents occurred which Dr. Fleming always happily referred to as "one of the pretty ways of Providence".

After he left me, this "unknown" came to mind, and I immediately followed him into his office to tell him. He carefully took down all that I knew, which was not much, and I went back to my desk. Mr. Aylesworth the treasurer came in and remarked, "Here is an interesting letter", and handed me a communication from an attorney in Orlando, Fla., giving us the information that his client, Mr. Calvin A. West, had died and had bequeathed to West Virginia Wesleyan College the residue of his estate which would approximate \$250,000. This was our "unknown man". The very knowledge that this large amount would eventually come to the college was like a "shot in the arm"! Our drooping spirits immediately went spiraling.

We soon discovered a lot of people who knew the Wests. He was a native of Troy, Gilmer County. His brother and he had a small shoe store in Buckhannon in 1890 when the West Virginia Conference Seminary opened. He later was in business in Weston, then in Clarksburg. His wife's name was Mary Lowe from near Clarksburg with relatives in that section and in Shinnston, where the bodies of both now rest in the Odd Fellows' Cemetery. As soon as possible we got in touch with Mrs. West, and after we learned that we knew many of her relatives and friends in central West Virginia, a delightful friendship developed. A cousin of Mrs. West, Mrs. Pearl (Lowe) Johnson of Shinnston was in Wesleyan with me in the early 1900's. Later as pastor at Shinnston, another family of her relatives were members of our church. Shortly after the Wests were married,

they went to Cleveland, then to St. Louis, where he continued in the shoe business and accumulated his wealth. His health was not so good, and he retired. He purchased a home in Orlando, where he died.

Mrs. West related to me how they had practiced tithing all their lives, and had talked and planned for a long time how they would dispose of their estate. They had not been blessed with children, so wanted to do all they could for youth. Both of them loved West Virginia, and his interest was in West Virginia Wesleyan, because he had seen its beginnings.

In one of our early visits together Mrs. West confided with me that she wanted to do something for the college on her own account. Although she was named in her husband's will as a legatee if she ever wished to claim it, she modestly told me that she did not think she would ever claim a cent of it, for her own estate was as large or larger than her husband's.

At her invitation Mrs. McCuskey and I visited Mrs. West in Orlando in 1939. At that time she said that what she wanted to do was to build a chapel on the campus, and that if business conditions became better she might do it during her lifetime, but if not she would make provisions for the building in her will. This she did. At this writing neither Mr. West's bequest has reached us, nor has the chapel been built. Settlement of the estates have not been made due to the terms contained in the wills.

Dr. Fleming and I together made the first contact with Mrs. Annie Merner Pfeiffer in behalf of West Virginia Wesleyan. After some correspondence we visited her in her home in New York. We were graciously received and she listened attentively to our story. She assured us that she was interested and would study our situation. At that particular time her commitments were already made. We marvelled at her patience and sympathy and tenderness for her husband who was ill. He wandered into the room where we were talking, and she had to lead him back to his own room. We talked "library", for that was the one building most needed. (I would wake up at nights with a nightmarish startle, wondering what would happen if a fire would

strike the administration building in which our library was crowded). We learned that Mr. O. C. Poundstone an architect in Atlanta, Ga., had done a good deal of work for Mrs. Pfeiffer, so in addition to visiting a number of college libraries while going to and from Orlando in 1939, I called on him. We had an interesting conversation, and he showed me some plans which he had drawn for Mrs. Pfeiffer. He later gave valuable service during President Broyles administration in securing Mrs. Pfeiffer's decision in our favor, and drew the plans for the building bearing her name.

Meanwhile, another development was shaping up closer to home. It was the L. L. Loar Family gift. In substance the following "Story behind the Loar Gift" was written for the Corner Stone Laying of the Loar Building:

"Generous donations to worthy projects sometimes may seem to come "out of a clear sky", as though no one—perhaps even the donor—had ever thought anything about it before the announcement was made. That is seldom, if ever the case. Such was certainly not the case in the magnificent gift of the Loar Hall of Music and Fine Arts to West Virginia Wesleyan College by the late Mrs. L. L. Loar in memory of her family.

"When the thought of such a memorial had its inception in the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Loar, no one knows. Although the gift came through Mrs. Loar after the death of her husband, the idea was not a stranger to his mind.

"One day several years ago in a conversation with the late Dr. C. E. Goodwin and his wife concerning the needs of Wesleyan College, the name of the Loar family came up. This was due to the relationship between Mrs. Goodwin and Mr. L. L. Loar. Mrs. Goodwin was Nancy Loar; the daughter of William and Rebecca Core Loar; her father and L. L. Loar were cousins. (Nancy Loar Goodwin died March 17, 1941, following her husband's demise June 11, 1935).

"I was informed by the Goodwins that Mr. and Mrs. Loar had talked of a gift to Wesleyan, and that they had encouraged the suggestion. However, Mr. Loar was strongly inclined to another project and accordingly made no provision in his will for the college.

"After Mr. Loar's death, Mrs. Loar confided in Mrs. Goodwin that she was still interested in Wesleyan, and it was a matter of frequent conversation between the two women. One day in 1938 or 1939, Mrs. Goodwin asked me to call at her home as she wished to talk to me about a matter in which Mrs. Loar seemed greatly interested. I called and discovered that what she wished to tell me, in substance was this:

"Mrs. Loar had a piece of real estate in Clarksburg, costing her a good deal in upkeep and taxes, and from which she was receiving little income; she wished to know how she could place this property in the hands of the college as part of a larger gift later.

"I promised Mrs. Goodwin that I would think about it and talk with others concerning the suggestion, and then write her a letter outlining a plan which she could submit to Mrs. Loar. That I did, and the plan was that Mrs. Loar deed to the college the piece of real estate to become the nucleus of a larger gift either directly while living, or by bequest. Also, that if she needed the income, the college would be willing to enter into a contract with her in order to care for that.

"I do not know whether Mrs. Goodwin gave the letter to Mrs. Loar, or just relayed the information to her. Correspondence with Mrs. Loar is in the college files, but the copy of that letter to Mrs. Goodwin, if I made a copy, has not been found. Mrs. Loar thought well of the idea, but at that time did not care to talk to me or any one except Mrs. Goodwin. Soon after the above mentioned letter was written, Mrs. Loar told Mrs. Goodwin that she had definitely decided that she would provide a gift in memory of her daughter, Ethel Ray Loar, who was a student in Wesleyan in 1906. A building was her intention, and she even discussed its type, possible location, and certain of her daughter's possessions such as her piano, which would also go into the building.

"Another point which she confided to Mrs. Goodwin was, that since her husband's will could not be carried out, if the court would turn back the estate, she would increase the gift by that much. At first she wanted her plans to be kept secret, so Mrs. Goodwin and I gave her our promise that we would respect her wish. Then one day she met on a train coming from the east one of our students, Virginia Hyer of Buckhan-

non, and seemed happy to talk to her about Wesleyan. She told the young lady that she intended to put on the campus a building for music and fine arts. The secret was out! Mrs. Goodwin passed on, and I left the college in the summer of 1941. Dr. W. B. Fleming, who had been a close advisor and knew the details as here recorded, followed through during his term as acting president, as did other administrative officers, Dr. Broyles, Dr. Schoolcraft and Dr. Scarborough. Very valuable service was given by one of our alumni members of the Board of Trustees, Attorney A. F. McCue of Clarksburg, W. Va., who took care of all legal matters pertaining to the transaction.

"This brief sketch has been prepared to give recognition to the important part played by Dr. and Mrs. Goodwin, without whose patience and understanding it is quite possible that the gift would not have been made."

The union of Methodism was rapidly developing and became a reality in 1939, with West Virginia, excepting two counties in the north and three in the east, becoming one conference, bringing together all the Methodists of the three uniting groups within that boundary. What effect would this union have upon Wesleyan? Since Morris Harvey of the former M. E. South was also a West Virginia College, could they unite? Could the Methodists of the state support two institutions? Neither the M. E. nor the M. E. South had adequately financed Wesleyan nor Morris Harvey, and the financial and the numerical strength of the united group was not sufficiently increased to guarantee that the support would be better in the future. Morris Harvey had been forced to change its location to Charleston and was holding its classes in rented buildings in the city.

It was my conviction that all the interests of Methodism and of the Kingdom of God could be better conserved if the two institutions would unite; better support could be provided for one than for two; competition for students and for support would be eliminated; Methodist sentiment and alumni sentiment which had accumulated during the past years could be fostered and cemented. The question was *where* should the union take place—at Buckhannon, Charleston, or somewhere else? We had

weathered the depression storm and Wesleyan was solvent with valuable buildings and a lovely campus. I felt that if there were interest enough in the Morris Harvey group, we could sit down together and work out a plan by which both institutions would profit.

Sometime during the years 1938 to 1941, a movement got underway in Charleston for the establishment of an Educational Center, the hope of which movement was to unite *all* the church colleges in the state on one campus. The idea seemed to me quite fantastic. The man who seemed to be the "field agent" for the plan was J. E. McCulloch. Of course, Morris Harvey was already on the ground, but years of service and denominational sentiment had put deep roots into each church college location in the state. Furthermore, all of them were solvent and had no need of moving. I told McCulloch, who came to see me several times, that it was unthinkable that Bethany College would leave Bethany, or Salem leave Salem, or Alderson-Broadbush leave Philippi, or Davis and Elkins leave Elkins, and that I could see no reason under the sun for Wesleyan leaving Buckhannon.

I could understand the laudable interest which Charleston had in securing a college for that growing metropolis, but by no means was I convinced that this so-called "educational center" was the answer, nor that a church sponsored liberal arts college was the type of institution most valuable for that section. I believe then as I do now, that the best contribution the church can make to the educational life of our citizens is through strong, distinctly Christian liberal arts colleges. With this in mind I made certain approaches to President Rigglesman of Morris Harvey.

Each of us respected the other's views and sentiments. It was reported to me that once when Dr. Rigglesman was on Wesleyan's campus, he remarked, "This is a beautiful campus; I can't blame McCuskey for not wanting to move the college; I would feel the same way if I were in his place."

There is no doubt about the interest which Charleston had in establishing a college in the city; and I think there is little

doubt that pressure was put upon Morris Harvey to avoid union unless Wesleyan would leave Buckhannon. My feeling was that Wesleyan had much to lose, and little to gain in leaving Buckhannon; while Morris Harvey had nothing to lose and much to gain in uniting with Wesleyan at Buckhannon. I went so far as to suggest to Bishop Leonard and others of Wesleyan's board that, if union could be effected, I would resign in favor of Dr. Riggleman. They advised against any public statement, or approach on that subject, unless Morris Harvey showed interest in the union of the two institutions. In one conversation with Dr. Riggleman, trying to convince him of the necessity of uniting in order to conserve Methodist educational interests, I mentioned the fact that Morris Harvey, if continued in Charleston, would develop into a municipally controlled institution; in which it was likely to lose its identity as a Methodist college, and perhaps its identity in name.

By recommendation of the West Virginia Annual Conference, the Board of Education at Nashville appointed a commission to study our college situation in the state. The commission made an extensive study and submitted a lengthy report of its findings with a recommendation to the conference in 1941. The commission favored one institution rather than two, and gave cogent reasons for that recommendation. It also favored Morris Harvey becoming a part of Wesleyan, as a school of religion. Before the conference took action on the matter, Morris Harvey, by action of its board of trustees, formally withdrew from the conference, and relinquished any claim to support by the conference. So, the first part of my prediction, that Morris Harvey, might lose "its identity as a church college", was fulfilled.

At the time of this writing almost two decades since the incidents described, Morris Harvey as an independent college under the continued efficient leadership of Dr. Riggleman has made splendid progress. Perhaps her advancement has been greater than had she remained under conference control. Undoubtedly she is filling a needed educational place in the Charleston community and in the life of the state. May we not say

that this also is a part of the "all things working together for good".

In this connection, it seems to me that I should give the gist of my statement to the commission when it met at Wesleyan, and lift out of the commission's report certain passages which are pertinent to the situation. (The entire report is in my personal files; also, the lengthy statement by the Charleston Board of Commerce to the 1941 conference, which is evidence of the pressure of the city on the college situation.)

This brief statement is a summary of the attitude of Wesleyan's Board of Trustees at that time, revealed not in any formal statement of the Board, but in conversations which I had with most of them.

First and foremost, we did not want Wesleyan disturbed by any suggestion of a relocation at Charleston. Already hints and rumors of such a change had embarrassed the college both in solicitation of students and of funds. There had never been any pronounced interest in the relocation of Wesleyan among the Methodists of the former M. E. Church who had founded and maintained the college up to that time. With the exception of around \$100,000 granted by the General Board of Education (Rockefeller Fund), practically all our support had come from the Methodists of that group in West Virginia.

There was a proposal for relocation, emanating from Charleston, which came before the West Virginia Conference of the M. E. Church at its session in Clarksburg in September, 1925. An executive session was ordered for Friday, Sept. 25, and after some discussion, a motion to appoint a commission to give further consideration was overwhelmingly defeated. The lay delegates were invited to sit in with the conference and some of them took part in the debate.

As I recall, some of the arguments against relocation were as follows:

The suggestion was not only a relocation, but also a merger with Morris Harvey and a change from a liberal arts college to the status of a university. There was no money in sight for financing such a project.

Wesleyan had no prospect of selling her property, and to abandon it would have been a total loss. Moreover, the college was making splendid progress where she was as a church related college.

Then there was a question of ethics. The citizens of the town and community of Buckhannon from the very beginning had put a great deal of money into the institution.

They were *first* to give when the acreage was bought, and they had been the *first* to respond in every campaign for funds. Why should the conference be so unfair to such a community as to pull out, root and branch?

I called to mind these same reasons later when discussing the proposition of Mr. McCulloch, already mentioned. President Riggleman and I agreed that the suggestion of bringing *all* church related colleges into one center at Charleston was fantastic. On December 20, 1937, President Riggleman and I were together and talked about a possible merger of the two colleges, if and when unification of Methodism became a reality. Neither a merger at Charleston nor at Buckhannon, seemed feasible, which would leave two Methodist colleges in the state to be financed. So, it did not appear to me that even with a united Methodism in the state, the church could support two colleges, for the needs of both were very great. Furthermore, I said, "we believe the annual conference will more willingly make a decision which will be generally accepted, with less dissatisfaction and less chance of bitterness and frustration, if based upon a recommendation from you (the commission) as representatives of the Methodist Board of Education."

Well, the study commission presented its report at the annual conference in Huntington in the fall of 1941, which contained two or more proposals, the most important of which was as follows:

"To continue West Virginia Wesleyan at its present site in Buckhannon, and add to it the Morris Harvey endowment for the support of a school of religion to be known as the Morris Harvey School of Religion, seems to be the only plan that will promise West Virginia Methodists a fully accredited

college of liberal arts." The commission stated that it believed such a plan would keep faith with the original donors of the Morris Harvey Fund, and that "this enterprise will make it possible to give West Virginia a type of school that is greatly needed by the state. The perpetuation of West Virginia Wesleyan with the enlarged program contemplated in this plan will be of inestimable value to West Virginia."

I realize that there is some repetition in this chapter concerning the two colleges, but believe that the present readers would be interested in some of the facts and reasons for action taken at the 1941 conference.

According to an old saying, "coming events cast their shadows." It was during the years 1937-38, I began thinking about resigning. We were approaching the year of the semi-centennial, and my thoughts went beyond that year. The program adopted a few years before was moving along and progress had been made. The year 1940 would mark the end of a half century of development. Our financial situation was better and should our campaign for funds succeed we would be in still better financial standing. It seemed to me that another five or ten years' program should be worked out. However, I hesitated to plan something which I would not be able to carry through.

The work was telling on my physical energy. Unfortunately I was not of the temperament to carry out Dr. Trotter's suggestion "to lay aside my worries". Too many times I took the college to bed with me, and it was too big for me to sleep with. It crowded me out! I had an uncomfortable feeling that I might "break" and cause unnecessary trouble to both the college and myself. It was about this time also that my physician discovered a physical condition which ever since I have had to fight, and which at that time I was not certain could be overcome.

In my report to the Board May 31, 1938, the program outlined in 1934 was reviewed, and certain objectives added as a "continuation program". By the time of our board meeting June 6, 1939, Methodist unification was a reality, and it seemed more than ever that soon a change in administration should be made. My report contained the suggestion that a careful survey

of our situation be made, and closed with these paragraphs:

"From the results of such studies or survey, a program covering five or more years should be evolved. I believe we should be thoroughly convinced of the soundness of our educational policies, the scope of our field, the reasonableness of our program, and the need for a church college of great strength in our state. Once such convictions seize us, we in turn shall be better qualified to produce like convictions in our Methodist people, and permanent development will be assured.

"It has been my desire always to deal frankly with you, and share with you my honest opinions. Therefore, I wish to make another statement. It is my feeling that with such a survey as I have indicated, and the subsequent program covering any period of years, the administrator who is to carry it through should have much to do with charting his course. I have not annoyed you with misgivings and complaints, although the discouragements have been many, and the burden has been heavy in these eight years. You have shown uniform kindness and consideration, and have given all reasonable help, so that I have never felt that I was bearing all the load. Nevertheless, the responsibility for the success or failure of an institution is made to rest finally upon the chief executive. My judgment is that it would not be wise to permit myself to carry this responsibility much further into the future.

"I am not asking that the board construe this statement as a formal resignation at this particular meeting, but, in fairness to you who must act upon all suggestions offered, in fairness to myself, and in just consideration for the best possible advancement to our beloved college, in which we all unite, I have opened my mind to you. We should not proceed with undue haste, but since you are aware of the direction in which my thoughts are running, you will be at greater liberty to discuss the future program of the college.

"With strong leadership, better financial support, a united Methodism, and the spiritual dynamic which only a vital faith in Christ Jesus our Lord can produce, West Virginia Wesleyan College cannot fail to make a most brilliant record in the next half century."

Members of the board, and especially Mr. Law insisted that I remain until after the semi-centennial celebration was completely over. Two years quickly passed, with efforts in the financial campaign and other events incident to the anniversary. On June 3, 1941 I submitted my last report to the board, in which the following paragraphs were included:

"During the past year I have struggled toward a decision and have wavered between personal sentiment and common sense. From that day in November, 1901, when I first enrolled as a student in the West Virginia Conference Seminary, to this moment, my interest and affection for this school has increased. I am loath to leave it. That is sentiment. Forty years of intimate association with the institution, as student, as a member of the West Virginia Conference, as a trustee, and as president, compel me to desire only the continual growth of Wesleyan with increasing usefulness to our youth who are the greatest asset of the church and the state. My common sense tells me that another, a younger man, with physical capacity to carry forward a vigorous administration for another decade or two, should be placed at the head of this college.

"Moreover, in view of the situation in which we find ourselves, as one of the two Methodist colleges in the West Virginia Conference, neither one of which having received adequate support in the past, nor both of them likely to receive adequate support in the future, the conference may seek to combine the two, or decide to support but one. In my judgement something definite should be done at the coming session of the annual conference. In whatever manner the problem is solved, it must be done in a Christ-like spirit, with as little disappointment as possible and no bitterness and no sharp divisions. I wish the board to be free to select my successor and to take time to make whatever adjustments may be necessary in order to conserve all the educational interests of the conference.

"I am, therefore, tendering my resignation to take effect not later than September 1, 1941, and respectfully urge your favorable consideration of the same.

"Once again I thank you for your faithful cooperation, and for all courtesies shown me during these years. I have

nothing definite in view; but, I am a Methodist preacher, and a member of the West Virginia Conference, and shall continue to be subject to the judgment and will of the conference. Wherever I shall be, I shall be for Wesleyan; and when I shall pass beyond, I trust I may be remembered as a good minister of Christ, and a loyal son of West Virginia Wesleyan College."

My resignation was accepted. Dr. Wallace B. Fleming was elected acting president and assumed his duties as such during the summer. There was on my part a sense of relief when I no longer had the responsibility of the presidency; at the same time there were loneliness and regrets in breaking ties with board members, faculty and students. These emotions were more poignant when the time came to move from the house in which for ten years we had lived and watched the stream of young life moving up and down the campus walks and by our windows.

We planned to drive with friends down into Virginia, visit Williamsburg and other historic points during Freshman Week at Wesleyan. It was always such a delight to meet the new boys and girls, and I didn't want to be in town when I could no longer as president welcome them. So far as emotions were concerned, I might as well have stayed, for when we got to Williamsburg and visited the William and Mary College, it was Freshman Week!

CHAPTER IX

A Yankee In A Southern Church

THE 1941 SESSION of the West Virginia Conference was held in Huntington, September 24, with Bishop James H. Straughn presiding. I went with mingled feelings of ease and apprehension; ease because the strain of college affairs was behind me, apprehension because there was not in my mind the faintest glimmer of my appointment. Since the presidency of the college had not been filled, and there seemed no disposition on the part of the trustees to select a man from the conference, I had nothing to "trade"! What church would open to me without injury to any other man?

Bishop Straughn had talked to me about another term as district superintendent, but I shied away from that, sticking to my preference for a pastorate. Conference business and adjustments were still a little "bumpy" due to the size of the conference and the personnel mixture of the uniting groups, the three branches of Methodism within the original boundary of the West Virginia Conference, plus parts of other conferences.

We were all working under a new order or a new plan of organization, parts of which were unfamiliar to all of us.

However, among us all there was a spirit of genuine interest, brotherliness, good fellowship, and an honest desire to make unification work. Many problems had to be solved by commissions and committees. I have previously mentioned the problem of the two colleges, which was finally settled at the conference. There were disappointments and some bitterness on the part of the friends and supporters of Morris Harvey, which only Christian courtesy, kindness, and time would eliminate.

There was little for me to do during the conference except to visit with friends and attend the sessions. Another item concerning Wesleyan claimed my attention. The board of trustees was to be reorganized by making room for representatives, both ministers and laymen, from the former M. E. Church, South and from the former M. P. Church. Mr. Clyde O. Law and one or two others were in favor of reducing the number on the board, which consisted of twenty ministers and twenty laymen. Mr. Law had mentioned the matter to me several times. He also had a feeling that there should be more laymen than ministers on the board. I never agreed with either idea.

The wider representation which the larger board maintained throughout the conference and the state has always been to the advantage of the college. The desire for the predominance of laymen over the ministers is based on the assumption that laymen are stronger in finance and business acumen than ministers. Generous and princely giving is not a distinctive mark of either group, but of individuals in both groups actuated by spirit of devotion and loyalty. Many ministers have excellent business judgment, and are quite capable of looking objectively at any business proposition. Moreover, a church institution supported by the church invariably looks to the ministers for leadership in any project affecting its interest. No change was made at this conference, which I feel certain added much to the success of subsequent calls for support by the college.

One day during the conference, Bishop Straughn said to me, "Brother McCuskey where do you want to go?" My answer was "Where can I go?" He mentioned two churches in cities in widely separated sections of the state, and interestingly enough,

neither one of them of the former Methodist Episcopal Church. Either church would have been all right, but I was not too enthusiastic about living in either city. Later in the conference he asked me about St. Paul's, Parkersburg. I told him I would be happy to go back to Parkersburg, if the move would be acceptable to St. Paul's. I did want to be sure that there was no feeling of aloofness towards me because I had been previously at St. Andrews which was of the former M. E. Church. It was not until Saturday night that the final word was that St. Paul's would "take me in".

Looking back over the years to the churches we have served, there is considerable satisfaction in the memory that every church received us gladly, and so willingly cooperated that each proved a happy pastorate. In none of them was this spirit of friendly cooperation in greater evidence than at St. Paul's. The entire congregation seemed determined to make us feel welcome and at home. The church for years had carried the slogan "The Church with a Warm Heart", and from our first Sunday we were impressed with its meaningfulness. Perhaps, there was a little "leaning backwards" to make us feel certain there was no coolness towards a minister of the former "northern" branch of Methodism. This attitude had the desired effect in putting us at ease.

St. Paul's has a long and honorable history, in the traditions of the M. E. Church, South. Methodism in the region of Parkersburg dates back to the late 1780's or early 1790's. The "Little Kanawha" circuit is first mentioned in early conference minutes in 1799. Parkersburg is first mentioned in 1831. The north and south division of the Methodist Episcopal Church came in 1844. St. Paul's as a distinct organization dates from that time when, by the terms of the separation, they took over the church in which sympathizers on each side of the controversy worshiped. Those adhering to the original Methodist Episcopal Church "moved out" and worshiped by themselves, eventually building another sanctuary.

Litigation was begun to have the building on Fifth Street restored to the M. E. Church. The courts made the decision

favorable to the M. E. Church, in 1857, and the M. E. Church, South, after worshipping for a while in the City Building, built a new church on the corner of 7th and Market where the Chancellor Hotel now stands. It was dedicated in 1858 and known as the "First Methodist Episcopal Church, South". It had a membership at that time of 225. The congregation continued to grow and to worship in this building, until the present building was constructed and dedicated July 7, 1901, as St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, South. My last report to the conference in 1949 gave the membership of the church as 804. The church has grown with the city, and through her ministers and members, individually and collectively, the organization has made a splendid contribution to the religious and moral welfare of the community. The most widely known pastor of the congregation was the late Bishop U. V. W. Darlington, who served the church from 1901 to 1905.

Time and the grace of God have helped to soften the feelings which the division of 1844 caused. New families moved into the city, and new families were started by marriages into other denominations. This was going on before the unification in 1939. As a result, I soon discovered that many of the congregation did not have Methodist, South, background; there was a mixture of M. E., M. P., Presbyterian, Baptist, etc. There were some I had baptized when children in my earlier pastorate at St. Andrews.

Neither were they all Democrats! However, the majority were of southern background, denominationally and politically. The whole atmosphere was quite congenial to my own independent way of thinking and acting. I have always registered as a Republican, but seldom ever "voted it straight". Neither have I held rigidly to denominational lines, believing that our love should be like that of God's, which is "broader than the measure of man's mind".

However, sentiment was still deep, and certain respect and love for the tradition from which St. Paul's had come were apparent. I had no disposition to disregard these feelings. There was plenty to remind one of the earlier days; there were descend-

ants of the earliest members of the Church; certain names continued on the roll, Smith, Wade, Chancellor and still others dating from the turn of the century, who had given the best years of their lives to the church's affairs.

Mr. Levin Smith had been a tower of strength, not only in the local organization, but as a leading layman in the Western Virginia Conference. He was still active and a delightful companion in church work. For years he taught the Men's Bible Class and gave both material and spiritual encouragement to his pastors.

People have moved far towards mutual respect and understanding when they can laugh at their differences! At one of our early board meetings, Mr. Smith turned to me and said, "Well, how do you think you are getting along with this bunch of Rebels?" I replied that I thought I was coming along well with St. Paul's, adding, "I guess it is all right if *you* wish to use that word, but I shall not. Anyway, I don't know how close I came to being a Rebel". Mr. Smith chuckled and said, "You may be surprised to know how close I came to being a Yankee". This is his story:

He was born in 1863, and when the doctor asked what name he would bear, his parents said "Levin". The doctor thought the name was "Lincoln" and so registered his birth as "Lincoln" Smith, which he said remained on the record in Wood County until after he had graduated from law school and started his practice. He had it changed!

Not all could see the funny side of things, nor make allowances for inept remarks by others. It so happened that a short while before my pastorate began at St. Paul's, a minister of the former M. E. group was guest preacher one Sunday. He evidently forgot what church he was in, and during his sermon he referred to "Sherman's glorious march to the sea"! One faithful member who had come from the "Deep South" immediately seized his hat and stalked out. Of course, any sensible Yankee could see nothing "glorious" about that "march" which had so much of what Sherman must have meant when he described war as "hell", so how could one expect a second

generation Southerner to take kindly the reference!

In these days as I write these memoirs, one cannot help noticing the remarkable change in the attitude towards the Negro and the receding shadow of prejudice. At one of the earlier sessions of our conference just in the beginning of this century, I was considerably startled by this incident.

A preacher who had been transferred into our conference from some southern conference sat next to me when a Negro representing our Board of Freedman's Aid was introduced. Abruptly this brother got up and shoved past me muttering as he went, "I never did listen to a 'Nigger', and I'm not going to now".

Prejudice is, after all, an individual matter. One cannot charge an entire group with prejudice because *one* or a *few* of that group are so afflicted. For instance, it is not fair to say that the South is prejudiced against the Negro, or against the North. Some people *are* and some *are not*.

During my pastorate at Seventh Ave., in Huntington, a man by the name of Jenkins was pastor of Johnson Memorial (M.E., South). He was from the Deep South and the son of a Confederate officer. One day we met on the street, and in his strong southern accent, he asked me what I thought our General Conference of 1920 would do about unification. I told him that really I did not know, but believed that the conference would act favorably. He said, "Well, I hope they do, and that they make it so emphatic that *our* church can't help but do the same. But", he said, "we have some folks so opposed to you Yankees, that if your church would vote to disband and all become members of the M. E. Church, South, they would vote to keep you out".

It has been a long hard pull for the American Negro, but he is at long last finding his place in society according to his ability and talents without discrimination because of color.

We had barely moved in and settled when came Pearl Harbor, and the frightening events of the Second World War. Our Church was soon to feel the awful ache of lost sons. One Sunday I was told that Lt. Richard Hughes, U. S. N. Air Force,

was home. I went to the Hughes home on Avery Street to meet the young man next day, but he had hurried back to his base on Newfoundland. He was sent out on a reconnaissance mission and his plane went down in the North Atlantic. This was but the beginning of the sorrows and anxieties of scores of our families, not unlike that which touched every church and every community in our land. Our boys and girls went into the different branches of the service; most of them came back, but, of course, several did not.

My duty seemed clear, to encourage those who were away, stimulate hope and faith in those at home, and maintain regular and helpful services for the comfort of all. We needed all this for ourselves as well, for both our sons and our son-in-law were in the service. (Our daughter and her two children lived with us until after the war when her husband returned).

War is a bitter experience, in physical suffering, mental anguish and spiritual adjustment. So many questions are posed by those depending upon one for counsel and spiritual guidance, and many arise in one's own mind. How shall we reconcile the sovereignty, the goodness, the wisdom and the love of God with such an utterly fiendish thing as war? Some may claim to have "all the answers"! To me, the best answer is an unwavering trust in God, and a determination to act in every situation according to our best enlightened understanding, each one being directed, by his own conscience. I feel sure that war is not the will of God, but man has individually and collectively interposed his own will. Multitudes of innocent and Christ-like people are caught in the jam. These innocent are found among enemies as well as ourselves and our allies. They pray for themselves and for victory as well as we, to the same God.

In any war, some are sure to be killed and many badly wounded. Should I pray for God to spare *my* sons, but let other men's sons be killed? Were mine more worthy to live than others? Was I more righteous than other men and, therefore, my prayers and my faith should claim the answer, and they would come home unscathed? Really, I could never bring myself to think that way.

I tried to put my feelings in a collective prayer for our congregation which appeared on our bulletins during most of the war. It was copied in certain papers including the Christian Advocate. One fraternal organization in another state asked the privilege of using it in their meetings. This is it:

We humbly bow our heads in Thy presence, O God, and reverently lift our voices to Thee in behalf of our own beloved friends and brethren, who stand guard between us and the enemies of our homes and churches, our liberties and our very lives. God grant them courage in danger, endurance of mind and body in long hours of hardship; patience under stress of illness and pain of wounds. May the comradeship of Jesus Christ relieve them of loneliness, deliver them from temptation, purify their motives, shield them from bitterness and hatred, and in the event of death, brighten their way to Heaven.

Keep us faithful to them and to Thee, and make us worthy of their sacrifices for us; in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

Many of the deepest spiritual experiences of my life came as a result of the intimacies of human contacts during these war and post-war years. No doubt many were "tried in the furnace" of anxiety, fear, uncertainty, weariness of body and mind, and sorrow; and, I have no doubt they were "brought forth more bright".

How long the war would last no one knew, but I felt certain, as in the case of the depression, it would not last always. Therefore, I followed the same principle as a pastor that I did as president of the college—"a positive and constructive attitude." The church organization must be kept functioning until peace came; we would be in a position then to move forward.

Certain improvements had been made on the building at St. Paul's, particularly the basement, which left a debt of a few thousand dollars. With a slogan of, "Debt Free in Forty-three", we cleared that. We completely met our quota for the Reserve Pension Plan, and each year met all apportionments and budgets in full. There was a steady, but slow, gain in membership and most encouraging development in the spirit of cooperation and

smooth working organization in all the departments of the church.

As normal economic conditions returned following the close of the war, and new industrial plants brought many more families to the area, the church began to feel "growing pains". There was much talk of repair, remodeling, additions, etc. During the year 1946-47 the official board authorized a special survey committee to study the whole problem and make a report on plans and steps to be taken. This action is best revealed in the two paragraphs taken from my report to the fourth quarterly conference, August 13, 1947.

"The members of the official board are forward-looking and have taken steps to meet the challenge of the year ahead. Definite plans will be laid for a membership drive during the year, which will fit into the plans for the educational program of the Crusade for Christ. We have enlarged the committee on membership, for the purpose of a more closely knitted organization to reach the constituency of St. Paul's.

"A special committee has been appointed to make a careful survey of the needs of the church, both the physical plant and the organizations, and to cover immediate needs and long-range development. They are to take time to make their study and at a later date bring in their report. Greater Parkersburg seems to be on the verge of a really great material development which will mean greater population and consequently increase problems of social, economic, moral and religious nature. We must be ready for these and keep pace with the development, or lose our opportunity and our influence."

This committee went quite thoroughly into the details of immediate needs and into possible future changes which would add to the effectiveness and attractiveness of the plant. As time went on, during the next two years, 1947 to 1949, it became more apparent that the industrial advance of the area would mean advance in every way, and that religious interests must move forward or the church prove derelict in meeting spiritual obligations. St. Paul's could not merely "mark time", she must move forward.

Meanwhile, I kept contemplating possible retirement. Pastoral responsibilities increased with the increased opportunities which community growth presented. It was never my disposition to spare myself in either mental or physical energy, and I discovered to my chagrin, that I could not keep the pace which I had maintained through past years. Both Mrs. McCuskey and myself were feeling the strain of continuous effort, and wished for a lightening of the load. When should the break come? In 1955 I would be at compulsory retirement age, and that would make 50 years of active ministry. Should I try to continue at St. Paul's until that date, which would mean a pastorate of 14 years? How many of those years might be really an imposition upon the congregation? Would not the church do better under the leadership of another? We did not want the wear and tear of another move, by asking for another church. We weighed all these considerations very carefully and prayerfully, and decided to request retired relation at the 1949 conference.

A few sentences from my statement to the board early in 1949 best tells the story:

"My relation with St. Paul's has been most happy; officials and members have been uniformly kind; warm friendships have been formed; the church has responded to the leadership offered, and progress has been made. However, reviewing the seven and more years I have been here, I can easily see failures along the way, and I am quite certain we have not done as much as we should have done. For this I carry my share of the responsibility.

"I have felt that a more vigorous leadership is needed; and perhaps a change in approach to your problems would add incentive and aggressiveness to your efforts. There is always the possibility in a long pastorate, of people becoming so used to the pastor's manner, voice and message, that the force and freshness of appeal is lost.

"It is not pleasant to refer to age, but the calendar does not lie; neither do the unmistakable physical evidences which any one with sound mind can detect. Too often many people have discovered that 'it is later than we think.'

"We both have been feeling the pressure of responsibility, and after forty years of pretty active public life, including six years as district superintendent and ten years as college president, we would like a few years of quiet before we are called from the scenes of time. I trust you will not reproach us for this desire.

"I assure you that it is not easy to break ties which are so delightful, not to contemplate the approach of the time when the intimacy and fellowship of the active ministry must terminate, but it seems to us the wise step to take."

In 1948 we purchased a lot in North Parkersburg, and in the fall of that year started the construction of the house in which we now live, 3419 Central Ave. Both of us found great pleasure in planning the house, and in doing certain things with our own hands. On June 9, 1949, we completed moving and placing furniture, and spent our first night in our new home. A sensation of gentle comfort settled on both of us because our itinerant days were over. This was to be our last move.

Meanwhile, upon the recommendation of the survey committee, the official board authorized some very much needed and rather extensive repairs on the parsonage, and our moving out gave the workmen unhampered opportunity and time to complete this work before the new pastor's family would take over in October. Our conference met in Charleston September 21-25, and I answered the roll call as a Methodist preacher in "effective relation" for the last time.

It is impossible for one to properly evaluate his own career; while the memory of certain dreams and plans which were fulfilled brings a degree of satisfaction, the consciousness of terrible failures, many mistakes, and the pricking of conscience over possible hurts caused by those failures and blunders cast some shadows. My chief regret will always be that there are not more tangible results for those forty-four years of active ministry. There is a lingering suspicion that I could have done better had I worked harder, prayed more, and trusted my Lord.

CHAPTER X

The Sunset Glow

"Sunset and evening Star"

LOVELY SUNSETS have always fascinated me more than any other of nature's never ending parade of beauty. And, like every other form of beauty, a sunset's loveliness has many contributing factors, shifting clouds, changing colors, mountains, hills and trees etched against the horizon. Sometimes reflections in the clear water of lake, ocean or stream, and again patches of rainbow tints in wave spray.

Spring, summer, fall and winter all bring their varied hues and ever changing background to the sunset picture. It is doubtful whether one spot, or one country, or one clime is the *best* setting for the evening picture, but I do believe there is beauty in any sunset anywhere. Nature is so lavish in spread of space and varied color that the greatest of painters and color photographers can capture but a fragment of her canvas.

My first thrill of a sunset was as a child watching the lengthening shadows of trees close by our farm home, and the sun's rays through the ripening wheat as it rippled gently in the wind. I remember other scenes when I often sat on the bank of the Ohio and watched the sun go down.

For a time it seemed to me no sunsets could be more lovely than those I watched from the third story windows of the old Seminary building at Wesleyan. The enjoyment of those scenes was added compensation to the few cents an hour I earned as janitor! The money was soon spent, but the treasured beauty of those sunsets is still with me.

One does not have to travel far to see a sunset, sometimes all he has to do is turn around! Here we are now, my wife and I, almost any evening of the year, from my study window, or the back porch, or the kitchen, as we eat our evening meal, one can say to the other, "Look! What a gorgeous sunset". So, we watch the sunset glow in the sky until the stars appear.

At almost four score years we also watch life's sunset glow and wait until the stars appear with no fear of the night, for on the other side of the sunset is the sunrise of eternal day.

This chapter could be a continuous record of daily events, ended abruptly by illness or a sudden call to "move on". Such a record would be uninteresting and monotonous, a repetition of like incidents and activities, so we shall move toward the end of the story.

When retirement from the pastorate became a fact, my decision was to make the rest of my days reasonably happy and satisfying to myself and all the family. Complete idleness was not for me. That would be boredom. I planned to keep busy with reading, writing, preaching and, when called upon, to supply a pulpit, help a minister in case of illness, or on vacation, conduct preaching missions, or teach in training schools.

In the fall of 1949, Rev. W. D. Winters, then pastor of the Walton Memorial Church at Ravenswood, invited me to conduct evangelistic services for him. This was an interesting beginning of retirement years. The town was included in the Parkersburg District when I was superintendent, and I found many old friends and acquaintances. The attendance was not good, nor the visible results satisfying. I could not help recalling the experience we had here in the 1920's with the Ku Klux Klan; the former Methodist Episcopal Church was nearly disrupted by antagonism created through members and opponents

of the organization. The careful pastorate of the Rev. A. C. Riffe following the difficulty kept the church together and functioning.

The two factions tried to involve Mr. Riffe in the dispute, and he replied by telling them a story attributed to Mark Twain. Mark once listened to an argument between two groups concerning the reality of heaven and hell. They appealed to him for his opinion, but he refused to express himself, saying that he had "friends in both places"!

After the unification of the Methodist bodies, the two churches in Ravenswood united, sold the former M. E. property and now worship in the former M. E., South building, which is the Walton Memorial. At the present time this river town is in the midst of an industrial development due to the nearby Kaiser Aluminum plant. Naturally the church is sharing in the more prosperous times.

In 1950 the unexpected death of Rev. James Lutz, newly appointed pastor of Bethany Church, Parkersburg, left that pulpit vacant. I was asked to supply until a permanent adjustment could be made. In the shift of pastors, Wesley Church in Vienna was without a pastor so I supplied that pulpit for two or three months. Another summer I spent in Elizabeth, seat of Wirt County. After the adjournment of conference, the pastor appointed to that charge was transferred to another conference, so we cared for that congregation until a permanent pastor was appointed. The same thing happened on the Waverly Charge, a circuit of four churches, which I supplied for three months. First Church of Marietta, invited me to preach for them during the illness of their pastor. I was particularly happy in all these "supply" pastorates with my contacts with the young people; several young men have gone into the ministry, or they are now in preparation for that work, and we keep in touch with them.

Within a twelve month period it was my privilege to serve two churches in Belpre, Ohio. The pastor of the First Methodist Church in Belpre abruptly left to accept a pastorate of another denomination in another state. That district of the Ohio Conference had been unfortunate in the loss of several pastors after

their conference session and no appointment seemed possible until the next session. The district superintendent asked me to supply that pulpit until May.

About the time for the conference session, the pastor of the Belpre Congregational Church accepted a call to another church, and the board of deacons invited me to serve the church until they could find another pastor. The people of both congregations were exceedingly cooperative and responsive, which made the associations with the town's people very delightful.

I knew many of the citizens of Belpre through business and social contacts or through family and church relationships. Quite a number of the people living in Belpre worked on the West Virginia side of the river; many of them were originally West Virginians. So far as the spirit of fellowship and form of worship in the Congregational Church was concerned, there was so little difference from the Methodist "way", that I felt perfectly at home among them.

There have been few weeks thus far during the time of my retirement when I have had no speaking or preaching engagement, either in my own or other denominations. My relationship with the different branches of the church and with different races has been a happy and rewarding spiritual experience.

My concern about the Parkersburg District Youth Center carried over until 1957 when I asked to be relieved of any official connection with the project. Since the beginning of the development at Cross Roads, it has seemed to me a very valuable enterprise for both youth and adults. Many of the churches of the district have not availed themselves of the facilities offered except as their youth met in district assemblies. The center has lacked financial support commensurate with its program and opportunities, but those of us who through the years have given willingly of our time, work and money, have felt amply repaid. Keeping in touch with the thought and activity of youth has been stimulating.

Civic affairs have claimed some attention and effort, which I could more readily give when the responsibility of the active

ministry ceased. While serving on the Community Chest Board and as Chairman of the Council of Social Agencies, the importance and value of all these organizations, welfare, philanthropic, religious, became more apparent. In reality, they are the "lengthening arm" of the church in the community, giving the individual a fine opportunity to express his concern for many people less fortunate than himself. It is my hope to continue to serve any one, or all of these agencies together, in whatever way my capacity will warrant.

There is another continuing interest which binds me to kingdom affairs through Wesleyan College. It is the Dorothy Lee Scholarship Committee for Overseas Students. Since I am dedicating this book to the overseas students, past present and future, of the Dorothy Lee Scholarship Fund, it is right that I give space to the organization of the committee and to those most closely associated with the work.

The committee was organized during the school year of 1945-46, and was the outgrowth of conversations between President Broyles, Dr. W. B. Fleming, Mrs. Laura (Rector) Hedrick and myself, before and during the West Virginia Annual Conference session at Charleston in 1945. The immediate objective was the financing of a Chinese girl at Wesleyan, Julia B. Cheng, daughter of Dr. James Cheng and his wife Dorothy Lee of Shanghai. Dorothy Lee of the class of 1927, was the first Chinese graduate of Wesleyan. The *long range* program of the committee was the creation of a permanent organization and the establishment of a fund to aid other overseas students.

The work of the Dorothy Lee Committee over the period of a dozen years since the beginning in 1945-46, is itself an illustration of the working "together of all things for good", and deserves a more detailed account than is possible here. Names and faces of people who played an important part in the organization and continuation of the committee move interestingly before me.

Laura Rector Hedrick graduated in the class of 1930 and was a good friend of Dorothy Lee. Dorothy was married to Dr.

James T. Cheng, June 8, 1927, at the home of Mrs. John Graham (Miss Julia Bonafield's sister) in Tunnelton, W. Va. by the late Rev. Fred Bishop, who at that time was pastor of Andrews Methodist Church in Grafton. The newly-weds returned to China where James became a successful physician and surgeon and at one time was the attending physician of Chiang Kai-shek. Their very interesting story is told in a publication by Dr. Frank Cartwright of our board of missions, under the title, "*Life Has No Ceiling*." Dr. Cartwright is a native of Moundsville. We have been long time friends, and he was a boyhood friend of Dr. T. M. Zumbrunnen who was a member of the committee. Another mutual friend in Moundsville is Mary Scott, in whose home some of the "courtship" of these two Chinese students took place. Miss Scott has also been a member of the committee.

We would have been terribly handicapped in the work of the committee had it not been for the care and attention given to our plans by Wesleyan's Dean A. A. Schoolcraft. Since he had to pass on the academic qualifications of these overseas students, and since he was "on the ground" and had facilities in his office for correspondence concerning them, we asked him to assume that responsibility. As was his habit, and because he was in complete sympathy with the program, he did *more* than was required. He contacted individuals, groups, and churches, and found sponsors for several of the students which relieved the fund of financial burden and widened the scope of our usefulness. The personal interest which Dr. Schoolcraft took in these boys and girls is appreciated alike by the students and by the other members of our committee.

It was Laura Rector, however, who kept in closest touch with Dorothy by more or less frequent letters. When the Cheng children learned to talk, they were taught to call her "Aunt Laura", and it was agreed between the two women that if possible these children would attend Wesleyan College.

The oldest child was Julia B. so it was quite natural that when she was ready for college, Laura would take definite interest in helping her through. For several years she served as

DOROTHY LEE AND HER FAMILY



THIS PICTURE taken during World War II in Shanghai, China, shows the Cheng family and American friends. At left is Howard Spery, an American soldier from Parkersburg, Mary Cheng and her father, Dr. James Cheng, and her brother, Thomas, Mrs. Dorothy Lee Cheng, the first Chinese student to graduate at Wesleyan (1927), Methodist Bishop Ralph Ward, and Julia B. Cheng, the oldest daughter. Spery, who had heard of the Chengs through Mrs. Ralph Hedrick of Parkersburg, looked them up and arranged for the picture.

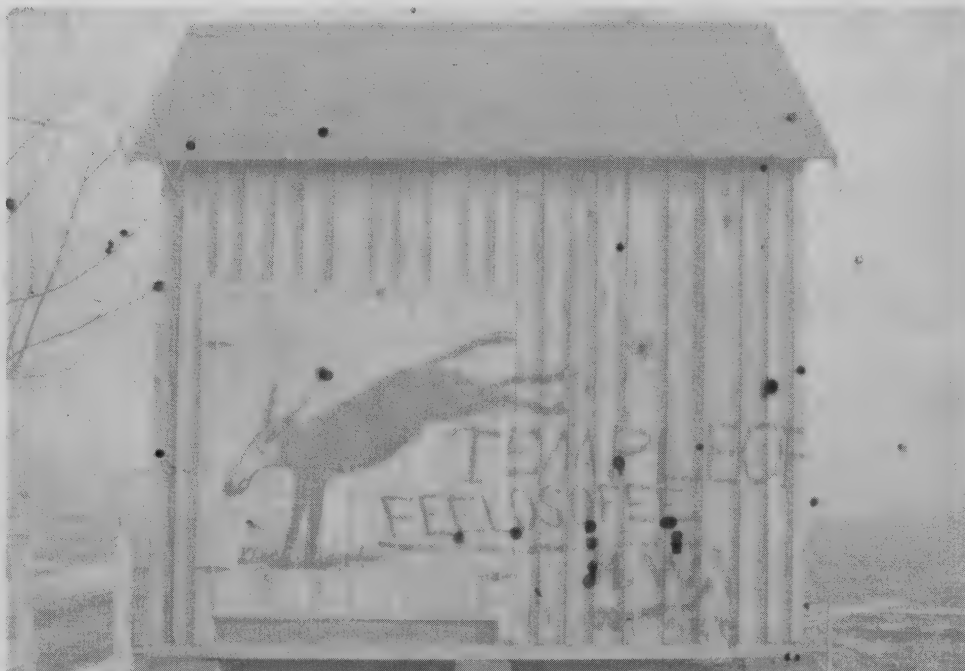


SHORTLY AFTER World War II, this picture was taken at St. Paul's Methodist Church in Parkersburg at a dinner, where Julia B. Cheng, the first student aided by the Dorothy Lee Fund, was among the honor guests. At left in the front is Mrs. Marjorie Fisher, Miss Julia Bonafield, Miss Cheng, Mrs. Hedrick Rector, and Mrs. Howard Spery. At the rear are Dr. Roy McCuskey, Dr. Frank Cartwright of the Methodist Board of Missions, and Howard Spery.

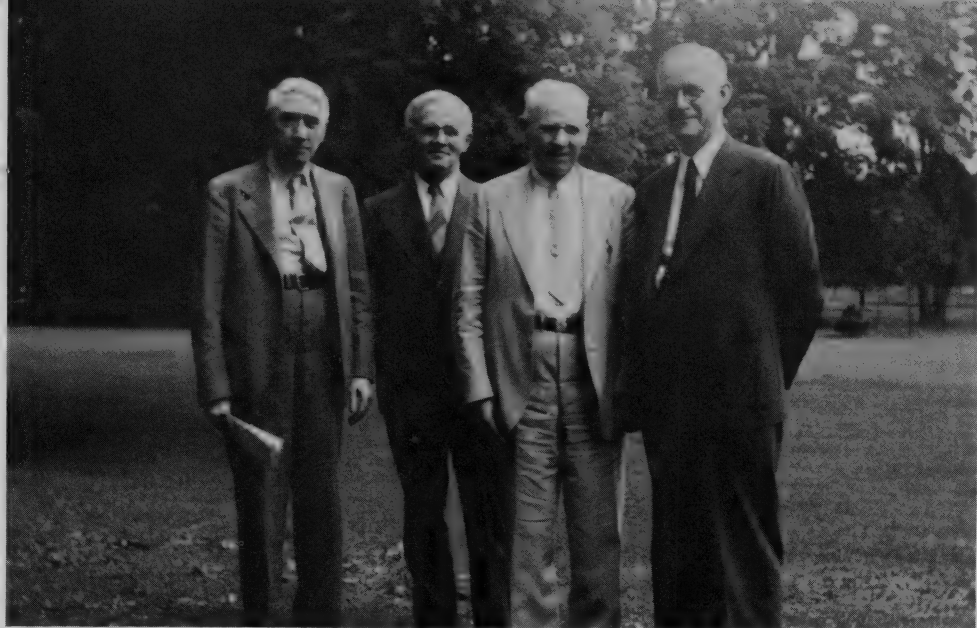


THE FUND THAT has extended financial assistance to a number of overseas students seeking their education at West Virginia Wesleyan bears the maiden name of the first Chinese student to graduate at the college, Dorothy Lee. After graduation she married Dr. James Cheng. Both were foster children of West Virginians serving as missionaries in China. They returned to China and Dr. Cheng was at one time personal physician for Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

THE FIRST STUDENT to receive financial aid through the Dorothy Lee Fund for Overseas Students was the oldest daughter of Dorothy Lee, Julia B. Cheng. She graduated at Wesleyan in 1950. The fund was started originally to help her after the Chengs were compelled to leave their homeland because of the communists. Her sister, Mary, also studied at Wesleyan. Brother Thomas continued his studies in this country and received a Ph. D. degree.



DR. McCUSKEY admits that he had a hand in the decoration shown here on the campus barn sheltering the pony of the children of President John Wier. The painting was executed by moonlight on a Saturday night by a student who ranks today as a prominent West Virginia attorney. The next day word of the deed spread about and townfolk flocked in to gaze and guess who did it. The five students involved stood about taking part in the guessing. President Wier viewed his "Temple of Feelusofee" (he pronounced it in that manner) and laughed.



IT WAS OLD HOME week at Wesleyan when these former classmates at Boston University got together for a brief reunion on the campus at Buckhannon. They are, left to right, Dr. Roy McCuskey, Dr. Irwin R. Beiler of Allegheny College, Dr. J. Elbert Wells, at that time Buckhannon district superintendent, and Dr. Edgar S. Brightman, professor of philosophy at Boston U.



TWO MAJOR CRISES at Wesleyan found Dr. McCuskey on hand. He was a student when fire destroyed the Seminary Building on a frigid February morning in 1905. Twenty-five years later he was president when the college weathered the trials of the depression. Dr. McCuskey recalled the morning of the fire that found students and faculty seeking to salvage books, records, and other movable items. This picture shows the building after it was reduced to a smoking shell.



THE McCUSKEY FAMILY posed for this picture at the golden wedding anniversary observance by Dr. and Mrs. McCuskey. Their two sons and daughter standing behind them are Dr. John F. McCuskey, Leah R. (Mrs. T. M. Whitley), and Dr. Paul L. McCuskey.

secretary of the committee and has played a very important part in all that we have done.

I first became acquainted with Laura back in the 1920's when, as district superintendent, I met her at the home of her Uncle Ed. Schneider. I may have had some part in encouraging her to enroll at Wesleyan. (I may as well admit here that she has been the "gadfly" stinging me into action in writing these memoirs. She helped drive us to Florida in 1953, and as we drove and talked, she "argued" that this should be done, and I wrote some of it that winter while in Key West.)

Conditions in China through Japanese occupation and the Second World War worked havoc with the Cheng family. They lost practically all of their possessions and had to start over again in Shanghai. Julia B. needed help badly! We acted as quickly as possible. I was named chairman of the committee, and solicitation of funds began. Dr. Fleming, who was never happier than when raising money for such good causes, put himself into the task, and we soon had sufficient on hand to guarantee the girl's expenses. She enrolled in 1946 and graduated in 1950, becoming the first overseas student to benefit by our fund. Thirty boys and girls have been given aid through our fund—fifteen of whom have graduated. They have come from China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Philippines, Samoa, Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary, Switzerland, Malaya, Nigeria, Kenya and Bermuda.

Two other persons must be brought into this picture, Julia Bonafield and Edna Jenkins.

Miss Julia Bonafield of Tunnelton, W. Va., went to China as a missionary in the 1890's. I knew of her through a group of women in Wesley Church, Wheeling, which bore her name. My two sisters were members of the group and I recall a meeting they once had at our home in South Wheeling. After I became a pastor, Miss Bonafield, back in America on furlough, was a guest in our home and spoke in one or more of my churches. She spent her entire active years as a missionary in China, and even after her retirement she went back to China, and was in Shanghai during World War II. She knew Rose

Mace, a classmate of mine in 1905 Class of the Seminary. Rose also gave her years of missionary service to China.

Miss Bonafield was the foster mother of Dorothy Lee, having adopted her as a mere child. She really wanted to spend her last days with Dr. and Mrs. Cheng and her "grandchildren", but the hard circumstances of the war, and the overrunning of China by the Communists made that impossible, so she returned to America and became a member of our committee.

She had a broader outlook than the education of Dorothy's children. She wanted to reach out to other boys and girls. It was largely due to her suggestion that the term "Foreign Students" was changed to "Overseas Students" in the name of our Committee, *The Dorothy Lee Scholarship Committee for Overseas Students*. Her objection to the word "foreign" was that it has "too much of an unfriendly connotation". Julia Bonafield was also associated with Dr. Frank Cartwright in her China career, and Dorothy Lee helped in the care of the Cartwright's children when they were all living in the same city.

Edna Jenkins deserves a far more extensive citation than is possible in this connection for she has had such a vital interest in West Virginia Wesleyan College. While she has done many other things directly and indirectly for the institution, I believe that her most significant efforts have been as a member and supporter of the scholarship fund. My own life has been enriched by her friendship and unselfish devotion to good causes, especially to Wesleyan.

Edna and her brother "Jim" were completing their studies at the seminary when I entered in 1901. The student body in those days was not large and friendships were easily formed. Two of their relatives were also students at that time, Joe Gibson and his sister Bess, (Mrs. Northdurff) of Kingwood. Edna's parents were Mr. and Mrs. Peter Jenkins of Volcano, Wood County, W. Va., an oil producing community, a few miles east of Parkersburg. They were religious people and members of the Methodist Church.

Edna graduated from the Seminary in 1902, studied piano at Oberlin College, taught music in the Cairo public schools,

and then became a private teacher of piano with students in the Volcano-Petroleum community and in Parkersburg. Her mother passed away in 1916, and she continued to care for her father in their home in Petroleum.

Her brother followed his interest in oil production which started in the Volcano field and at the time of his death in 1938 in Los Angeles, was vice president of the Tidewater Oil Co. He never married. Edna was visiting him at the time of his unexpected death and returned with his body for burial in the family plot in the Cairo cemetery.

My friendship with the Jenkins family was renewed in 1920 when I became district superintendent, and when visiting the Petroleum charge I was a guest in their home. Edna's father was a most delightful and interesting person whose companionship and friendship I cherished. He died in 1931.

Interest in boys and girls seemed to be a natural, inborn characteristic of Edna Jenkins. She showed it quite early by encouraging youngsters to go to school, and helping them develop their talents. Then she gave financial backing to others who wanted to attend college. I learned more about this in the 1930's when I discovered her support of students at Wesleyan, and of other benefactions to the institution culminating in her gift of the Jenkins Home Economics Cottage. She was elected to membership on the board of trustees in 1942, and for her interest and loyalty to the college she was granted the honorary degree of Doctor of Philanthropy in 1955.

Not only has Miss Jenkins given generously to the current operation of the fund, but she has also put the first substantial sum into its endowment. She has taken personal interest in these overseas students, following some of them back to their native lands with gifts and letters.

That which endears this fine woman to all of us is her modesty concerning her contributions. Once, after some praise had been given her for some donation which she had made, she commented in a letter to me, "Too much is being said about me, I don't deserve so much credit simply because I have a few more *dimes* than some other people!"

My association with those who have joined me in this undertaking and with the young men and women from distant lands has been so splendid that I hope several years more may be granted in like service. Certainly the outreach of such an enterprise is quite intriguing. I once suggested to Dr. Cartwright, that he add one or more chapters covering the people linked with Dr. and Mrs. James Cheng and his children, to his book "*Life Has No Ceiling*," and title it, "*Life Has No Ceiling—Nor Walls*".

In the beginning of this chapter, mention was made of "clouds" as factors in the changing sunset scenes: low ceilings—gray skies—mist—rain—snow—heavy storm clouds, may hide the sun for brief periods resting the eye and driving the meditations deeper within. Occasionally the clouds break and pencils of light dart through with widening tints of pink, rose, blue, burnished silver and gold, framing images of forests, ships, castles, profiles of faces, and *crosses*.

The clouds have come, and gone, perhaps not entirely vanished, the glow still lingers.

Quite naturally as age creeps on, friends and family slip away. We have been spared biting sorrow since Mrs. McCuskey's parents and my mother left a number of years ago. However, about the beginning of this decade, through separation by miles, we have felt the loneliness of absent ones. Mrs. McCuskey's only sister and family moved to California, and our only daughter to Florida. My oldest brother, Sam, after some weeks of illness, departed in his 80th year. Death broke into our midst in 1954 when my brother Ben's wife passed on. Ben cared for his wife through months of illness. He returned from Los Angeles in 1956. This was the first time we had seen each other in 48 years. My sister, Mrs. Frank Hubbs, in her 86th year went to her reward in 1957, and her husband in his 89th year, in 1958. My only remaining sister, Mrs. Muldrew, died in September, 1958, in her 90th year. Brother Ben planned to return for our Golden Wedding anniversary, but illness put him in a hospital, where he is at this writing. He is in his 85th year.

These have been the shifting clouds, bringing periods of darkness. (Ben died Jan. 10, 1959).

The year 1958 held for us pleasant anticipations, and the splendid surprise mentioned in the beginning, the naming ceremony of the McCuskey Hall. Following that event was the fiftieth anniversary of the 1908 Class. The four of us, Charlie Hartley, Jerome Dailey, Florence Warden Harmer and myself were all living; only Judge Dailey was absent from the reunion, too ill to attend. I visited him in his home, and in September, he died. So we rejoiced in our memories during the summer and waited for September 9, our Golden Anniversary.

For this occasion our children had planned an open house reception at Paul's home. What a delightful time! All our children and grandchildren were there. Hosts of friends and well-wishers came in to greet us throughout the afternoon. Loads of cards, letters and telegrams reached us. We were still reading them in October, and talking about all that had happened. The sunset glow was rich in brightest hues, when, O my soul! what sudden darkness engulfed us, a terrible cloud of impenetrable blackness, as when a lightning bolt at night disturbs the power line and the lights go out. And it was *night*, the night of October 30.

John's car left the road, threw him out, turned over on him and crushed out his life. The news reached us in our living room, where we were waiting for "trick-or-treaters". John's pastor, Dr. R. L. Moore, living nearby, called Paul's home, and presently Paul and Martha and a doctor friend came to us with the news. This was the first break in the family circle. John was 48. He and Christine Young had been married since June 1, 1930. She is left with their only son, John Fulton, II, who was eleven years old November 7, 1958.

How little I knew in beginning my story, or in stating the title, "*All Things Work Together for Good*," that before I had finished, we would face so tragic a test of our faith. Now we must practice what we have preached, apply to ourselves what hundreds of times we had told others in similar experiences. When the first few moments of shock had passed, and we were

alone in our "upper room", in Paul's home, it was the quiet voice of my wife that broke the silence: "We are no better than thousands of other parents who have lost their children", and immediately there flashed into our minds many of the "others" whom we had known. We thanked God for the years John had lived, for what he was and what he did. The few days following were hard for us; however, the revelations of the esteem, both as physician and man, in which he was held in the community of Clarksburg, made the load lighter.

The sun is breaking through—the darkness is passing—Thanksgiving has come and gone, and we are at Christmas. With our cards and gifts we sent this greeting-message:

"His Name Shall Be Called Emmanuel,—

God with us".

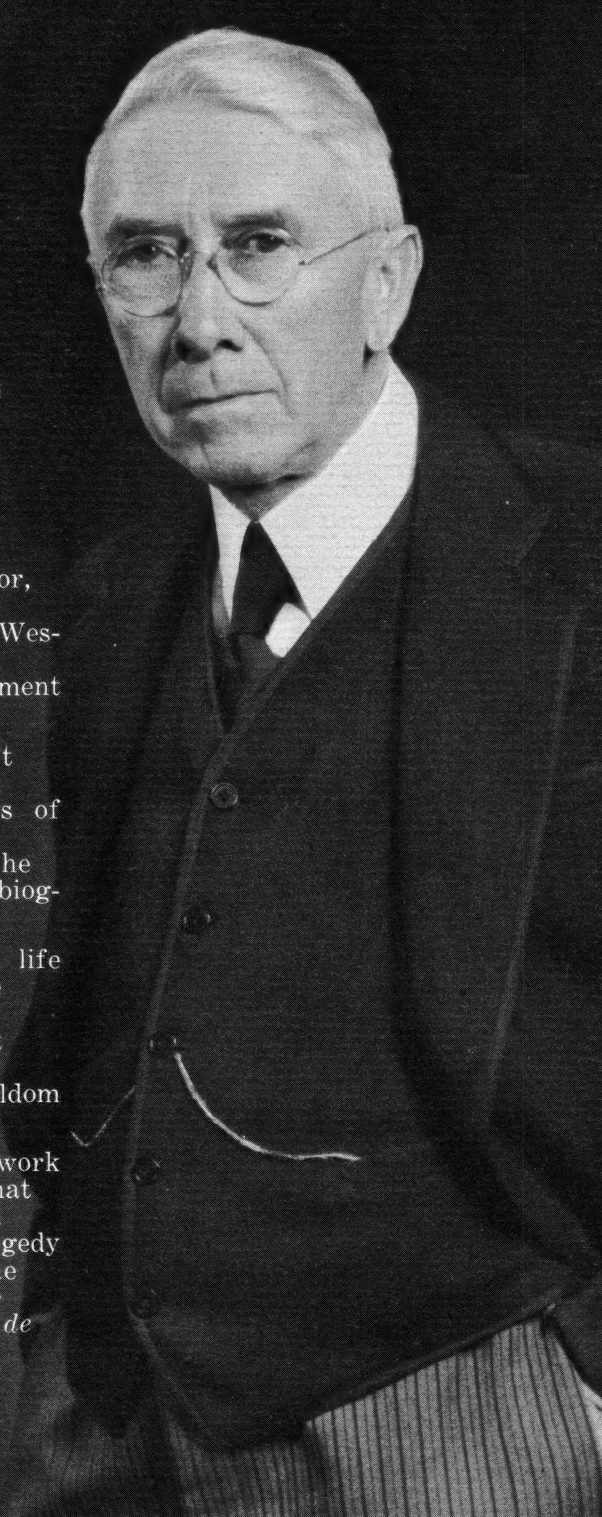
God is with us: day and night—in sunshine and in darkness—in weakness to make us strong—in temptation to keep us from wrong—in infancy to shield us—in youth to fashion our thoughts—in busy years to keep us faithful—in life's evening time to give us peace and quiet. GOD WITH US—all the time—everywhere, makes CHRISTMAS last all the year.

This is our fiftieth Christmas together, and this brief greeting-message is our witness to God's unfailing goodness and mercy.

Jessie and Roy McCuskey

How long the evening shall last, what clouds may still float by, we do not know. We believe the glow will linger, however dim our vision, and whether or not we see or understand *how* "all things" fit together, our faith is unshaken in the eternal truth—

"All things work together for good to them that love God".



Forty-four years in the Methodist ministry as pastor, district superintendent, and president of West Virginia Wesleyan College closed for Dr. Roy McCuskey with his retirement in 1949.

However, retirement didn't mean cessation of activity. In addition to serving churches of the Parkersburg area in emergencies as their pastor, he turned to writing his autobiography—this book.

He has recorded here his life from a log cabin farm home in Marshall county to his Parkersburg home—"our last move." It is an autobiography with a theme, something seldom found in such works.

The theme—"all things work together for good to them that love God"—is an expression of faith that even personal tragedy failed to daunt. It is also the title of his book, perhaps the longest but—most apt—*nom de libre* to grace the cover of an autobiography.